
The
Elixir
of
Love
Muhammad Rayshahri

بسم الله الرحمن الرحیم

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:Writer

Muhammad Muhammadi Rayshahri

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point

In the memory of Shaikh Rajab Ali KhayyatSpiritual lessons on the love of Allah (swt) from the life of the ۲۰th century spiritual exemplar, Shaykh Rajab Ali Khayyat. Includes .anecotes from his life and practical ethical advice for living a spiritual life

Foreword

point

The first question that may occur to the reader as to the reason the author (of the present book) has undertaken writing a commemorative volume about the perfect Gnostic, the pious servant, and the reverend "Shaykh Rajab Ali Khayyat"-particularly if the reader has been one of his disciples, would probably be: Why has a writer, who has never met with the Shaykh and whose field of work and research is not writing ?commemorative biographies, made such an attempt like this

The Charisma of the Shaykh's Sayings

:Imam Ali (a) has been quoted as saying

ان علی کلّ حقٍّ حقیقه، وعلی کل صواب نوراً

Together with every righteous affair there is a truth, and with every correct matter," (a light"(۱

Once at early youth when I accidentally encountered in Masjid-i Jamkaran in Qum with one of the devotees of Shaykh Rajab Ali, I became devotedly attached to the latter despite having never met him in person. I found in his words such truthfulness, .radiance and charisma that scented of the fragrance of the friends of God

"For years, I eagerly longed for the life-story and words of that "unschooled beloved

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Al-Kafi, II, ۵۴: ۴; Mizan al-Hikmah, XIII, ۶۵۲۰: ۲۰۸۳۸ -۱

and instructor of ethics at whose feet many professors from Universities and Hawza (Islamic Seminaries) had knelt in devotion, to be compiled, published and presented to .the public, especially the youth-who are in dire need of it at the outset of their life

If one of disciples of the Shaykh, who is given to writing, had made this valuable and instructive endeavor, there would have undoubtedly been compiled a more comprehensive collection than the present volume. For some reason, however, this was not accomplished, mainly due to the fact that most of the Shaykh's disciples and companions, who potentially could have played a helpful part in compilation of such .work, have already departed from this world

Several years ago I began to feel that the chance for accomplishing this task was gradually being lost, and if the memories of those devotees of the Shaykh who are still alive were not complied by now, perhaps it would never be possible to write his didactic biography, and truth-seekers would be deprived for ever of knowing the truths that this man of God had been able to discover. Thus, I brought up the issue with a brother-in-faith and asked him to arrange interviews with the Shaykh's devotees and record their memories on the basis of the topics that I had gathered .about him

This was carried out and the memories were written down. It was, then, prepared and edited by The Islamic Research Foundation and in June, ۱۹۹۷ was published by Dar al-Hadith

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.(Publication by the name of Tandis-i Ikhlas (A Figure of Sincerity

In spite of all its inefficiencies, the book was highly acclaimed by the readers, especially the young generation, to the extent that in a short while it sold out over a .hundred thousand copies in eleven reprints

By further research, more valuable points about the Shaykh's spiritual wayfaring and self-enrichment were revealed. This time, despite all my busy occupations, for some reasons I decided to reorganize the book in a way that the spiritual character of that devoted gnostic, secrets of his spiritual achievements, and his method of self-improvement can be rewritten. The present book is, by Grace of Allah, the product of that decision. In this new edition, renamed 'The Elixir of Love', some considerable .remarks have been made

The Style of Writing

In authoring this book, all the interviews made with Shaykh Rajab Ali's devotees were revised and catalogued. Afterwards, the significant and instructive points were extracted from among the dialogues and categorized in four parts: Traits, A Leap Forward, Self-Building; and Passing Away. In the end, the main task of chaptering and editing began. The significant distinction between the biography of the reverend Shaykh and other biographies is the utilization of Islamic texts to authenticate his guidelines or some of his miraculous acts. Remarks on some relevant prophecies and .miracles that occurred to other friends of God were also included

Another point is that, brief quotations from Islamic texts brought up on each topic are .referred to more as examples

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For further details, however, the interested reader may refer to the newly published Persian translation of Mizan al-Hikmah by the same author as specified at the .footnotes

Beyond a Commemorative Volume

This way, the volume on the late Shaykh turned out to go beyond a mere commemoration. It not only indicates the path to the sublime destination for humanity, but also serves as an impetus to self-improvement, guiding the spiritual seeker toward the status of the righteous and the truth-seekers by means of the Holy Qur'an and traditions of the Infallible Imams (a). In an introduction to his commentary on the Hadith of the Armies of Intellect and Ignorance, Imam Khomeini (ra) asserts the inefficiency of books written about ethics from scientific and philosophical points of view, and emphasizes the society's need for books on ethics such as the present :one. He further comments

To my humble opinion, scientific and historical ethics as well as literal and scientific" interpretation (of the Qur'an) and commentary on hadiths in like manner, divert one from their destination and goal and is distancing rather than approximating. It is my contention that in ethics and commentary on the related hadiths or interpretation of the noble verses referring to it (ethics), it is important that the writer should instill his purposes in the souls (of his audience) by means of warning and giving glad tidings, .preaching and admonishing, and reminding

In other words, a book on ethics should be of a practical preaching nature, curing ,maladies and defects by itself

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.rather than showing how to cure

Explaining the roots of morals and indicating the way to remedy (of immorality) does not drive one near to destination, does not enlighten a darkened heart, and does not rectify a corrupt disposition. A book on ethics is one that by reading it a hard (and unfeeling) soul turns tender, the impure becomes purified, and the darkened gets

radiant; and that is achievable only if the scholar (preacher) is a leader while instructing, a therapist while presenting (ways of) therapy, and if his book itself is the medicine for the ailment rather than a prescription exposing medications. The words of a spiritual physician should serve as medicine, not prescriptions; and the above mentioned books are prescriptions rather than medications; though if I dared I would say that some of them (even) seem doubtful to be (considered as) prescriptions -this ".topic, however had better be dispensed with

The reader will find out by experience that the present Commemorative Volume is not prescription revealing medications; rather, it is indeed a medicine that heals diseases of the heart, makes the hearts tender and radiant, and takes the spiritual seeker .closer to his destination and goal

Authenticity of the Sources

As mentioned before, the sources of the Shaykh's Commemorative Volume comprises interviews made with his disciples and devotees; and except in few cases, all narrations are directly quoted from the Shaykh. And all the narrators -both the ones whose names are given and those who for some reason preferred not to be

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.named-are reliable and I am confident that what they have said is nothing but truth

What is remarkable is that all the things said about the reverend Shaykh here is what .his disciples have said about him without referring to them in details

Another point worth mentioning is that in quoting from the interviews great care has been taken to mention the exact words and make the least literal and editorial .corrections as far as possible

Stations of the People possessing Divine Knowledge

The greatest art of the reverend Shaykh is his attaining the elixir of love of God. He was actually an expert in such alchemy(۱); and the book was, accordingly, named, The

Elixir of Love. Exploiting this elixir, the reverend Shaykh attained the truth of Unity (of God). In chapter three of part three of the present volume you will read the Shaykh's :words in this respect

The truth of elixir (alchemy) is to attain God Himself.... Love of God is the final sttion of" servitude. ...The standard for evaluation of deeds is the standard by which the doer ".loves God Almighty

I presume whoever reads the Shaykh's biography, they will confirm that he had perceived the truth of the elixir of loving God; that through loving his Creator he had attained such perfection and high stations that is so baffling-if not impossible-for us .even to imagme

Many a time it happens that some ignorant individuals will deny the high stations of those possessed of Divine knowledge, merely out of their own disability and failure

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.See "The Shaykh's Greatest Art", chapter three, part three -۱

in comprehending those stations. That was why the late Imam Khomeini (ra)-the founder of The Islamic Revolution, strongly cautioned his beloved son, Haj Ahmad :Agha, of such attitude. He wrote

My son! What I first and foremost recommend to you is not to deny the stations of" those endowed with Divine knowledge, which is the manner of the ignorant; and beware of those denying the status of the friends of God, as they are highway (robbers of Truth."(۱

And in his advice to Haj Ahmad Agha's wife, he states: "I would not like to exonerate the pretenders; 'for many a cloak deserve to be burnt'. Rather I want you not to negate the essence of spirituality, which the book (the Qur'an) and the Sunnah (of Rasul Allah (s)) have alluded to and its opponents have either ignored it or have engaged themselves in the monotheism of the masses. I enjoin you (to know) that the

first step is to get out of the thick veil of negation, which is an obstacle to any development and any positive step. This (first) step is not perfection (in itself); rather it ".opens up the path to perfection

In any case, one cannot find a way toward Divine knowledge with a negating" attitude. As being selfish and egotistic, those who negate the stations of the gnostics and the positions of spiritual seekers would not attribute to their own ignorance whatever they do not comprehend, and negate it lest their selfishness and egotism would not

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.Sahifeh Noor, XXII, ٣٧١ -١

(be marred."(١)

The Human Beings who cannot be perceived

The stations of those endowed with Divine Knowledge are virtues that cannot be explained and described to most of the people. In this respect, a beautiful hadith is :quoted from Imam al-Sadiq (a) as follows

"لايقدر الخلائق على كنه صفه الله عز وجل، فكما لايُقدر على كنه صفه الله عز وجل فكذلک لايقدر على كنه صفه رسول الله –صلى الله عليه وآله- وكما لايقدر على كنه صفه الرسول –ص- فكذلک لايقدر على كنه صفه الامام – عليه السلام- وكما لايقدر على كنه صفه الامام –ع- كذلک لايقدر على كنه صفه المؤمن"

Masses are unable of perceiving the innermost core of Almighty Allah's (s) Attributes," and as they are unable of accessing the essence of Allah's (s) Attributes, they are likewise unable to perceive the depth of the attributes of His Apostle (s); and as they are unable to find out about the innermost attributes of his Apostle, they are likewise unable to fathom the attributes of the Imams (a); and as they cannot know the Imams as they should be known, they are likewise unable to recognize the truth of (the faithful as they should."(٢

When reached the stage of annihilation in Allah, man becomes His vicegerent and

representative in the world of existence. It is at this stage that analysis and description of his virtues, like that of God Almighty, would be impossible for the ordinary people. In this, characteristic, as it was noticed in the words of Imam al-Sadiq (a), there is no difference between the Prophet

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.Ibid, XXII, ۳۴۸ -۱
.Mizan al-Hikmah, I, ۳۹۰: ۱۴۰۰ -۲

s), the Imam (a), and the Faithful. Thus, it is not surprising to say that the spiritual) .stations and virtues of individuals like the reverend Shaykh are indescribable

A disciple of the Shaykh, to whom the present author has for years been devoted and quoted various accounts on the Shaykh's spiritual stations from, said that Once the :Shaykh had told him

O such and such! No one knew me in the world, but I will be known on two occasions;" once when the twelfth Imam (aj) will have returned, and once on the Resurrection ".Day

Accordingly, introducing the spiritual virtues and perfection of the reverend Shaykh in itself is a task that cannot be carried out by such books as the present volume and the like. The deepest impact that writing his radiant biography can leave would be by illuminating the general features of the reverend Shaykh's life, secret of his attaining the high spiritual stations of those endowed with Divine Knowledge, and his way in education and self-building. This, in itself, is a great and valuable task that has, by the Grace of Bounteous Allah, been undertaken. We are grateful to Him for such great achievement. Perhaps this writing is going to be a beginning step toward the actualization of the Shaykh's prophecy of his being briefly known after his death. As his son has quoted him saying: "No one gets to know me and after my death, I will be ".known

Muhammadi Rayshahri April ۱, ۱۹۹۹

Part ۱: Traits

Life

point

The pious man of God, Rajab Ali Nikuguyan known as the Reverend Shaykh and Shaykh Rajab Ali Khayyat was born in Tehran in ۱۲۶۲ S.H./۱۸۸۳ CE.(۱) His father, Mashhadi Baqir was an ordinary worker. When Rajab Ali was ۱۲, his father passed away and left Rajab Ali alone with no full-blooded brothers and sisters. There is no more knowledge at hand about the Shaykh's childhood. However, he quoted his :mother himself as saying

One night when I was pregnant with you your father -who was then working in a" restaurant -brought home some wholesome Kebabs. When I proceeded to eat, I found that you began to stir and beat my belly with your feet. I felt I should not eat from this food. I refrained from eating and asked your father why he had brought wholesome Kebabs that night, whereas the other nights he used to bring the customers' leftovers. He said he had actually brought these Kebabs without ".permission! So, I did not eat from that food

This story indicates that the Shaykh's father did not have worth mentioning features. :The Shaykh himself is quoted as saying

Doing good to and feeding a love of God by my father caused that God Almighty" ".brought me to this world through his loins

.The Shaykh had five sons and four daughters. One of his daughters died in childhood

The Shaykh's House

His simple brick house that was bequeathed to him from his father was located on Mawlawi Avenue, Siyah ha (presently Shahid

S.H. Solar Hijra, the Iranian Solar Calendar that began at Prophet's (s) Hijra to – ١
Medina

:Muntazari) Alley. He lived in this small house the rest ofhis life. His son says

Whenever it rained, the ceiling began to drip. One day, an army general, along with' some other governmental officials, came to our house. We had placed some basins and bowls under the rain dripping from the ceiling. Having seen our condition of living, he bought two pieces of land and showed them to my father, and said he had bought '.one for himself and one for him. My father replied: What we have is sufficient for us

Another of his sons says: 'When my life condition changed for the better I said to my father: 'Dear father! I have got four tomans and this brick house can be sold for '.sixteen tomans. So let me buy a new house on Shahbaz Avenue

The Shaykh said: "Whenever you wish go and buy one for yourself; for me, this one is "!good enough

He goes on to say: 'After my marriage, we prepared the two rooms upstairs and said to our father: 'High-ranking people come to visit you; so, please arrange for your :meetings in these two rooms.' He replied

".No way! Whoever wants to see me, let him come to sit in this dilapidated room"

The room he was talking about was a small one carpeted with a simple coarse mat .made of cotton with a table for tailoring

Interestingly enough, several years later, the reverend Shaykh let one of his rooms to a taxi

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driver named "Mashdi Yadullah" for twenty tomans a month. Later on, when the latter's wife gave birth to a daughter, the late Shaykh gave the name "Ma'suma" to her. When he recited adhan and aqama into the baby's ears, he placed a two toman

:bank-note in the comer of her swaddling clothes, and said

Aqha Yadullah! Now your expenses have increased; from this month instead of" ".(twenty tomans pay only eighteen tomans (for rent

The Shaykh's Clothing

The reverend Shaykh's clothing was very simple and neat. The type of clothing he used to wear was a set of clothes like that of Ulama including a cloak, a skullcap, and a .robe

What was interesting about him was that even in his dressing too, his intention was to attain God's pleasure. The only time he put on a robe to please others; he was .reproached for that in his spiritual state

His account of this event is as follows: "Nafs (carnal desire) is a strange thing; one night I found I was veiled (in darkness) and was unable to achieve divine grace, like I attained before. I probed into the matter, and upon humble requesting, I found out that the previous afternoon, when one of the nobles of Tehran came to visit me, he said that he liked to perform the evening and the night prayers with me (as prayer "!.. .leader). So, in order to please him, I put on my robe while performing prayers

The Shaykh's Food

His reverence never cared for delicious meals. Most

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often, he used such simple foods as potatoes and puddings. At the tablecloth, he would kneel down facing the qibla and kind of bending over the food. Sometimes he would also hold up the plate in his hands while eating. He would always eat with full appetite. Sometimes he would put some of his food in the plate of a friend that he could reach out (as a sign of respect). While eating, he would not talk, and the others would also keep silent out of respect for him. If someone invited him to a feast, he would accept or reject it with some deliberation. Nevertheless, he would most often

.accept his friends' invitations

He would not mind eating out; however, he was conscious of the effect of food on one's soul, and regarded some spiritual changes as a consequence of eating certain foods. Once, while he was traveling to Mashhad by train, he felt some spiritual contraction. He made an appeal (to Ahlul Bayt (a)), then after a while he was informed by intuition that the spiritual contraction had been the consequence of drinking of the (tea served by the train's restaurant.(١

Occupation

point

Tailoring is one of the praiseworthy professions in Islam. "Luqman the Sage" had :chosen this as his occupation(٢). It is quoted from the Holy Prophet (s) who said

عمل الابرار من الرجال الخياطه، وعمل الأبرار من النساء الغزل

The job of the righteous men is tailoring and the job of the pious women is" (spinning."(٣

The

١- .See "Threatened to a destiny like that of Balaam of Boer", Chapter Two, Part ٢

٢- Rabi' al-Abrar, II : ٥٣٥.

٣- Mizan al-Hikmah, IV, ١٦٢٨ : ٥٤٧٨.

reverend Shaykh had chosen this job as a means of livelihood. Hence, he was known as Shaykh Rajab Ali Khayyat (the tailor). Interestingly, his simple small house, as .described before, was his tailoring workshop, too

In this respect one of his children says: 'At first, my father had a room in a Caravanserai, where he pursued his tailoring profession. One day the landlord came to him and asked him to leave the place. The next day and without any arguing or

demanding any due rights, my father packed up his sewing machine and sewing table, brought them home, and gave the room back to the landlord. Ever since, he worked at .home in a room near the entrance as his tailoring workshop

Perseverance in his Work

The reverend Shaykh was extremely serious and persevering in his work. He worked hard to the last days of his life to earn his living through his own endeavors. Although his devotees were whole- heartedly ready to provide for his simple livelihood, he .would never accept

:The Holy Prophet (s) said in a Hadith

من أكل من كد يده، كان يوم القيامه فى عداد الأنبياء ويأخذ ثواب الأنبياء

Whoever earns one's own living, they will be ranked among the Prophets and" (rewarded as Prophets."(1)

:And in another hadith, he said

العباده عشر أجزاءٍ تسعه أجزاء فى طلب الحلال

"

Divine worship has ten parts, nine of which comprises earning lawful daily (sustenance."(2)

One of Shaykh's friends says: I never forget the day I saw the reverend Shaykh in the market who was

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۱- Ibid., V, ۲۰۵۸: ۷۲۰۹.

۲- Ibid., V, ۲۰۶۰: ۷۲۲۳.

pale in the countenance out of fatigue. He was going home carrying some tailoring tools and material that he had bought. I told him: 'Agha have some rest, you are not

:feeling well.' He replied

"!?What should I do with the wife and the children then"

:The Holy Prophet (s) is quoted as saying

ان الله تعالی یحب أن یری عبده تعباً فی طلب الحلال

"God likes to see his servant tired out in the way of earning his lawful sustenance." (١)

ملعون ملعون من ضیع من یعول

"Cursed is the one, cursed is the one who does not provide for his family's sustenance."(٢)

Equity in Receiving Wages

The Shaykh received very equitable wages for sewing clothes. He used to get wages for exactly the amount of stitching he had done and just for as much time as he had spent working on the clothes. By no means he would accept to be paid more than what he had worked for. Thus, if someone would say: 'Reverend Shaykh! Let me pay a higher wage.' He would reject.

The reverend Shaykh charged his customers on the basis of ij'ara (contract on hire and lease) according to Islamic law.(٣) But since he never tended to receive more than what he had worked for the customers, in case after finishing the work if he found that he had done less work than predicted, he would give back the money that he thought was extra to his real wages! One of the Ulama said: 'I took some cloth to the

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١- Mizan al-Hikmah, V, ٢٠۶٠: ٧٢١٨.

٢- Ibid., V, ٢٠۵٨: ٧٢٠٢.

٣- See Mizan al-Hikmah, ١, ۴٠: ١۶.

Shaykh to make a robe, a cloak, and a quilted cloak. I asked him how much I should

.pay.' "It needs two days work, so the wage will be forty tomans." He said

A couple of days later when I went for the clothes, he said: "The wage is only twenty ".tomans

I inquired: 'You said forty tomans?' He replied: "First I thought they needed two days "!work, but it just took one day to complete

Someone else also said: 'I took some cloth to him to make a pair of trousers. I asked him how much it will come to. He said: 'Ten tomans.' I paid him right away. When some time later I went to pick up the trousers, he placed a two-toman note on it and said: "."The fee came to eight tomans

The Shaykh's son said: 'Once he settled with a customer to make a robe for ۳۵ Rials. Some days later the customer came for the role. No sooner had he walked away with the robe than my father ran after him and gave him five Rials back, saying: "I thought "!it would take me longer time to make this robe, but it did not

A Reward for Equity

Equity in all tasks, especially in transactions is an important issue that has been highly :stressed in Islam. Imam Ali (a) said

الإنصاف أفضل الفضائل

(Equity is the best of virtues."(۱"

.And he further said

ان أعظم المثوبه مثوبه الأنصاف

(The greatest reward is one granted for equity.' (۲"

Just to know how

.Ibid. XIII, ۶۳۰۶: ۲۰۱۹۱ -۱

.Ibid. XIII, ۶۳O۶ ۲۰I۹۴ -۲

equity in transoctions is effective in self-building, and that God's favor with the reverend Shaykh is not exaggerated on, it will be worthwhile to deliberate on the :following account

(Equity Toward People and Meeting with Hazrat Wali 'Asr (aj

A man of knowledge was longing for meeting with Hazrat Baqiyyat Allah Imam Mahdi (aj), and he suffered agonies of not being granted the chance and for a long time he .underwent severe austerity and pursued spiritual seeking

It is well-known among the tullab (Islamic seminary students) of Hawza in Najaf-i Ashraf and the scholars of the holy shrine of Imam Ali (a) that every one who finds the honor to go the Masjid-i Sahla to perform the evening and night prayers every Tuesday uninterruptedly for forty nights, they will be graced with meeting the Imam al-'Asr (aj) For a while, he struggled to this end but to no effect. Then he resorted to the occult sciences and numerical symbolism and started self-discipline and other ascetic and rigorous practices in seclusion, anxiously seeking to meet the Hidden Imam (aj) but all in vain. However, as a consequence of his nightly vigilance and lamenting and wailing at dawns, he had developed some kind of insight and intuition, and occasionally some illuminating flash would be graced on him. He would fall in .ecstasy and rapture, often having certain visions and hearing some subtleties

In one of these mystical states, he was told: "Your seeing and being granted an audience with Imam al-'Asr (aj) will not be possible, unless you make a trip to

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such and such a city. Quite difficult as it sounded at first, but for that sacred purpose, it .appeared to be so convenient

Imam al- 'Asr (aj) in the Blacksmiths' Bazaar

After several days the above-mentioned man arrived in that city and yet even there he carried on his self-discipline and ascetic practices in seclusion that intended to last forty days long. On the thirty seventh day, he was told: "Right now Hazrat Baqiyyat Allah, Imam al-'Asr (aj) is in the blacksmiths' bazaar, in a shop belonging to an old .locksmith; so, be quick to go now and seek his audience

He stood up and, as he had already seen in his ecstatic vision, rushed the way down to the old man's shop where he saw the Holy Imam (aj) sitting there and talking amiably with the locksmith. When he greeted, the holy Imam responded and beckoned to .keep silent, (implying) watching for a wonderful scene

The Equity of the Old Locksmith

At this moment I saw a bent, fragile, old woman with a walking stick who showed us a lock with her shaking hand and said: "Will you, for God's sake, buy this lock from me ?for "three shahis"(١) I need three shahis

The old locksmith took a look at the lock and found it intact, and then said: "My sister! This lock costs "Two abbasis"(٢) because its key will cost no more than "ten dinars"(٣); so if you give me ten dinars, I will make a key to this lock and then it will cost ten ".shahis

,The old woman answered: "No

.A shahi equals around a penny -١

An abbasi equals four shahis -٢

A dinar equals one-fifth of a shahi -٣

I do not need that, I only need the money; if you buy this lock from me for three ".shahis, I will pray for you

The old man said with utmost naivety: "My sister! You are a Muslim, and I too claim to be a Muslim. So why should I buy a Muslim's property for a low price and deny

someone's right? This lock already costs eight shahis; if I want to benefit from it, I'll buy it for seven shahis, for it is unfair to make more that a shahi profit in a deal of only two abbasis. If you are sure you want to sell it, I'll buy it for seven shahis, and I repeat again, the real price is two abbasis. Since I am a businessman I buy it for one shahi .less

The old woman perhaps would not believe what the man said. She was upset and complained that nobody had been willing to buy that price. She said she begged them to buy it for three shahis, because ten dinars would not have sufficed her. The old .man paid seven shahis to the old woman and purchased it from her

!I will Visit him

:When the woman turned back to leave, the Imam (aj) said to me

My Dear! Did you watch the wonderful scene? You do likewise too, and become like" that, then I will come to see you. There is no need for ascetic seclusion and resorting to Jafr (numerical symbolism). Self-discipline and various travels will not

be required; instead show good action and be a Muslim so that I can interact with you. Of all people of this city, I picked out this old man, since this man is religious and knows God. And you observed the trial he went through: This old woman requested all in the bazaar, to fulfill her need and since they found her desperate and needy, they were all seeking to buy (her lock) cheap; and nobody bought it even for three shahis. This old man, however, bought it for its real price, i. e., seven shahis. Thus, every week (I pay a visit to him and show kindness and amiability to him."(۱

Self –Sacrifice

point

One of the most outstanding features in the life of the Shaykh was his serving the needy people and making self-sacrifice even in his very poverty. From the viewpoints of the Islamic traditions, self-sacrifice and altruism are the most beautiful

.(benevolence, the highest levels of faith, and the most superior ethical bounties(۲

In spite of the reverend Shaykh's meager re-muneration from his tailoring profession, he was highly generous and altruistic. The accounts about the self-sacrifices of this .man of God is really amazing and instructive

Self-Sacrifice toward other People's Children

One of the Shaykh's children quotes his mother as saying: "It was a famine period, Hasan and Ali(۳) were on top of the house roof making a fire. I went up to see what they were doing. I noticed they had taken a leather bag to roast and eat. Seeing such a

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.Sarmaye Sokhan" (The capital of speech), I, ۶۱۱-۶۱۳, slightly abridged" -۱

.Mizan al-Hikmah : ۱, ۲۲ : ۱ -۲

.Two of the Shaykh's sons who have died -۳

scene, I burst into tears. I climbed down the roof, picked up some copper and bronze (utensils) took it to the small market nearby, sold it, andbought some cooked rice. On the way back, I ran into my brother, Qasim Khan, who was a rich man. He saw I was very disturbed; he inquired the reason for my disturbance. I told him the story. When he found about the issue, he said: 'What are you talking about? I saw Shaykh Rajab Ali handing out one hundred tokens for chelowkebab among the people! Charity begins at home! When does this man want to...? It is true that he is a devoted and ascetic '.man, but his acting this way (neglecting his own family) is not rightful

Hearing these words I got even more frustrated. When at night the Shaykh came" home I had an argument with him...and then went to sleep disturbed and agitated. In the middle of the night I heard I was called out to get up. I got up, I saw (in the dream) it was Mawla Ali Amir al-Mu'minin (a) who introduced himself and said: He has been looking after the people's children, and we have been looking after yours! When your "!children starved to death, then go on and complain

Self–Sacrifice toward a Bankrupt Neighbor

One of the reverend Shaykh's sons related: 'One night my father woke me up and together picked two bags of rice; he carried one and I carried the other. We carried the bags to the

home of the richest man in our neighborhood. Handing the bags over to the owner of the house, my father said:" Dear fellow! Do you remember the British took the people to the doorstep of their embassy and gave them rice, and took back an ass–load(۱) of rice in return for each grain they had given to them, and they still do not let them go?!"

With this joking, we handed the rice over and returned home. The next morning he called out to me and said:" Mahmud! Buy a quarter of a kilo half–broken rice as well as two Rials of fat oil and give it to your mother to cook some rice!"

At those times, such behavior of my father was too heavy and unintelligible, for why must he have to give away the rice we had at home, whereas for our lunch we had to buy half–broken rice?!

Later on, I found that fellow had been bankrupt and (meanwhile) he was going to have a large feast.

Self–Sacrifice on the New Year's Eve

The late Shaykh Abd al–Karim Hamid relates: 'I was working as an errand–boy at the Shaykh's shop for one toman a day. On the New year's eve, the reverend Shaykh had fifteen tomans; he gave me some money to provide rice and deliver to some addresses, and at last five tomans was left that he gave to me!'

I thought to myself: Is he going home empty–handed on the eve of the New Year?' And at the same time his

.A kharwar equals about ۳۰۰ kilograms -۱

son's trouser leg was torn. So, I left the money he had given to me in the counter's drawer and ran away. Whatever the Shaykh shouted I did not return. When I got :home I found he had been chasing me. He said

, !Why did not you take money?" And he insistently gave the money to me"

Acts of Selfless Devotion

point

The reverend Shaykh's spiritual seeking and devotion was principally different from that of pretenders of Sufi paths. He did not approve of any of the Sufi orders. His spiritual procedure was that of pure devotion to the guidelines by Ahl al-Bayt (a), hence he would not only take heed of the obligations, but also followed recommended .practices

At dawns he would stay up, and after sunrise he would go to sleep for about a half or .a whole hour. Sometimes he would take a short rest in the afternoon

Although being a spiritual seeker himself, he would say: "Do not trust in mystical intuitions and never rely on them. We should always follow our Imams (a) in deeds ".and words, as our paradigms

:In public sessions, the reverend Shaykh would always resort to the holy verse

(ان تنصروا الله ينصركم ويثبت أقدامكم)

If you make effort in Allah's Way, He will help you and make your feet firm and...) secures you from being Shaykh along His Path), (Sura Muhammad, ۴۷: ۷)(۱) and he :would say

God has no needs. Make attempts in Allah's way by acting according to His" commandments

Translations of the Qur'anic verses are adopted from the English translation of - ١ ."The Holy Qur'an" by Abdullah Yusuf Ali, revised edition, ١٩٨٩

".and resorting to His Prophet's (s) tradition

:And he said

Nothing like acting according to the commandments causes man's prosperity and" ".sublimation

:The Shaykh used to say time and again

The religion of Truth is the one preached on Minbars (pulpits), but it is lacking in two" ".entities: Sincerity and love of God Almighty; these must be added in the preaching

:He said

".'The righteous are all doing well, but they should replace their 'egos' with 'God"

:And he said

".(If the believers give up the egotism, they will achieve something (i.e., high status"

:He also used to say

If man surrenders to God, abandons his own (biased) opinions and bigotry, and trust" ".whole-heartedly in God, God will teach and guide him onto His own Path

Taqlid

(Taqlid (following the outstanding jurisprudents in Islamic laws

According to the principle of practical devotion, the Shaykh was a Muqallid (follower) in religious ordinances, and followed one of his contemporary Marja' i.e., Ayatollah Hujjat. He says the way he chose this scholarly figure as his Marja' authority of :imitation

".I went to Qum, visited all Maraji', and I found no one as self-less as Agha Hujjat"

:He is also quoted as saying somewhere else

".I found his heart was devoid of ambitions and love of positions"

The reverend Shaykh bewared his friends of the "orders" and circles that had deviated from the above undertaking. A friend of Shaykh says: 'I asked the Shaykh :about one of these orders(۱). The Shaykh replied

,I was in Karbala"

.The narrator has advised not to mention the name of the order -۱

I saw a group passing by, with the Satan holding the reins of the one who was leading " ......:the rest. I asked who they are. They said

The reverend Shaykh believed that those who keep themselves at a distance from the Ahl al-Bayt (a) in their spiritual seeking, the gates to real Divine knowledge will be .closed to them

One of the Shaykh's sons relates: 'My father and I had gone to the "Bibi Shahrbano" Mountain.(۱) On the way we encountered a so-called practicing ascetic who had some :boisterous claims. My father asked him

"?What has come out of your ascetic practices so far"

That person bent down, picked up a piece of stone from the ground, transformed it !into a pear, and offered it to my father, saying: 'Here you are, have it

:My father said

Well-done, you did it for me; now tell me what do you have for God? What did you do" "!?for Him

.Upon hearing this, the ascetic (recluse) burst into tears

Dedicating the Work for God

One of the Shaykh's friends quotes him as saying: "In the evenings, I used to sit in Masjid-i Jum'a of Tehran correcting peoples' recitation of Sura al-Hamd and Sura al-Tawhid. Once, two kids were quarrelling, one beating the other. The latter came sat next to me to evade being beaten any more. I took the chance and asked him to recite his Al-Hamd and Sura al-Tawhid and helped him to correct them. This took all my time that night. The next

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.A mountain near Shahr-i Ray, in which Bibi Shahrbano is said to be buried -۱

night, a dervish came to me and said: I know the science of kimiya (alchemy), simiya (the producing of vision), himiya (the subjugating of souls), and limiya (magic) and came here to impart them to you, in exchange for the reward of what you did last '.night

I answered to him: No! If these were of any use, you would have kept them for "! yourself

Refuting un-Islamic Mortification

The Shaykh believed that if someone really acts according to the explicit Islamic ordinances, they will achieve all perfection and spiritual stations. He was strongly opposed to all kinds of extreme asceticism and self-mortification that are contrary to the traditions and practices of religious creeds. One of his devotees related: 'For a while I was engaged in self-mortification, living in seclusion away from my Alawiyya (descendant of Imam Ali (a)) wife in a separate room where I did my supplications and dhikr and slept there too. After four or five months, a friend of mine took me to see the reverend Shaykh. At his doorstep, and as soon as the Shaykh saw me, he said to :me outright

"? ...Would you like me to tell"

:I bowed my head in shame. Then the Shaykh continued

Why are you treating your wife like that and have abandoned her? ...Do away with" !these self-mortification and adhkar and recitals

Go get a box of sweets and go back to your wife. Say your prayers on due time with ".(the common ta'qibat (the supererogatory supplications after each prayer

p: ۲۶

Then the Shaykh stressed on the narrations from the Ahl al-Bayt (a) asserting that if a person acts sincerely and purely for forty days, the fountainheads of wisdom will :spring up from his heart(۱), and pointed out

According to these traditions if a person fulfills his religious obligations, they will" ".definitely acquire certain illumination

Acting according to the Shaykh's recommendation, that person gave up self-.mortification and returned to his normal life

First Payoff Your Khums

Dr. Hamid Farzam(۲) -a disciple of the Shaykh-describes the Shaykh in his devotedness in religious matters as follows: 'The Shaykh was equally dedicated to Shari'a (religious practice), tariqa (spiritual wayfaring), and haqiqa (the Divine Truth); unlike the Sufis who somehow reject the Shari'a. The first thing he said to me was: "Go and payoff your Khums!" He, then, sent me to the late Ayatollah Agha Shaykh Ahmad Ashtiyani (ra) for this purpose. And what a person he was! A true man of God from whom I acquired so many blessings and saw so many wonders in...! Anyway, I went to him as the Shaykh had instructed and paid off my Khums for the mediocre .house I had

Ethics

The reverend Shaykh was extremely kind, pleasant-faced, good-tempered, well mannered, and polite. He always sat in a kneeled position and never leaned back on a cushion, keeping slightly at a distance from it. Whenever he shook hands with someone, he was by no means the first to withdraw his hand. He was very calm and peaceful. While speaking, he

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See Mizan al-Hikmah, III, ۱۴۳۶: ۱۰۴۰; and "Al-'Ilm wal-Hikmah fil-Kitab", Ch. IV, Part -۱ ."III: ۴, ۲, "al-Ikhlas

He is now a member of Academy of Persian Language and Literature and was - ۲ introduced by his late friend Dr. Abdul 'Ali Goya to the Shaykh in mid-۱۳۳۳ S.H./۱۹۵۴ CE. He got deeply fascinated by the Shaykh's speech, and the same day of their meeting he was initiated among his disciples through being instructed a special dhikr by him. Dr. Goya believed the Shaykh specially favored Dr. Farzam and found him capable .and talented

was always cheerful and smiling. He rarely got infuriated; and when he did, it was the time when the Satan and the nafs (vain desires) would come toward him. At such times, he would be overwhelmed by fury and would usually leave home, until he .would win over the nafs; then he would calm down and return home

One point that he would always emphasize and recommend to others regarding "good disposition" was that one should always be good-tempered for the sake of God .and be well behaved toward people

In this respect, he would say: "Be humble and good-tempered for the sake of God, ".rather than for pleasing people and as hypocrisy

The Shaykh was quite taciturn; his pensive look explicitly indicated that he was engrossed in deliberation, remembrance of and attention to God. The beginning and the end of his talk was always concerning God. Looking at him would remind one of

:God. When sometimes he was asked where he had been, he would answer

".Inda Malikin Muqtadir-In the presence of a Sovereign Omnipotent"

In the supplication sessions (e.g., Nudba and Kumayl, etc.) he would weep a lot. Whenever the poetry of Hafiz and Taqdis was recited his eyes would turn tearful. At the same time of weeping he was also capable of smiling or stating something in order to soften the possible boring climate into a cheerful one. He felt a deep love toward the holy Imam Ali Amir al-Mu'minin (a), and was his staunch advocate and

lover. Whenever he sat down or stood up he would very gently recite the dhikr of 'Ya .(Ali adrikni' (O Ali! Hearken my pleading

Humbleness

Regarding this feature of the Shaykh, Dr. Farzam says: 'His conduct toward others was very humble and respectful. He would always open the door to welcome and admit us in for the sessions we used to hold in his house. Sometimes even he would .quite unaffectedly take us to his workshop where he used to do his tailoring

Once in the winter, he brought two pomegranates, and gave me one and said in very selflessly and unaffectedly manner: "Help yourself, Hamid jan! (dear Hamid)." He was by no means snobbish, and never considered himself superior to others. If he ever gave advice to someone, it was merely to fulfill the duty of guiding and instructing .others

He would always sit next to the entrance and whoever entered the room he would welcome them warmly, and respectfully invited them to be seated. Another disciple of the Shaykh says: 'When he was going somewhere in the company of his friends, he would not go ahead of others to get in.' Another one says: 'We had a trip to Mashhad together with the Shaykh. When we were setting out for the Holy Shrine, Haydar Ali Mu'jiza-son of the late Mirza Ahmad Murshid Chilu'i(۱)-frantically dropped himself on the Shaykh's feet trying to kiss his feet. The Shaykh retorted: "You mean-spirited one!

Beware of that disobedience of God! Be ashamed of

See “We sell on credit even to you”, Chapter Three, part ۱ -۱

"!?yourself! Who do you think I am

Reconciliation

One of the most important moral issues that the Shaykh was very concerned about was to reconcile people with each other. He would invite to his house those who were not on speaking terms with each other, and would reconcile them by means of .(quoting relevant verses from the Qur'an and Islamic hadiths (traditions

Profound Reverence for the Sayyids

He was highly reverent to the descendants of Imam Ali (a), Hazrat Fatima (a), and the Sayyids. He was frequently observed to be kissing their (the Sayyids') hands and .enjoined others to respect them too

There was a noble Sayyid who often went to visit the Shaykh. He had the habit of smoking the hobble bubble. Whenever one was prepared for him, the Shaykh himself -although not in the habit of smoking it -would first take a couple of drags, pretending he was smoking, so that the Sayyid would not feel ashamed of smoking; then the .Shaykh would offer it to him to smoke

One of the Shaykh's friends related: 'Once on a winter day I had an audience with the .Shaykh

:He said

".Let's go to one of Tehran's old quarters"

We went to an old alley. There, we found a shabby store where an old respectful Sayyid -who was a bachelor -worked as a charcoal seller and lived and slept there as

.his residence

It turned out that the previous night the kursi(۱) had been set on fire burning his .clothes and some of his belongings

His

p: ۳۰

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۱ - A square table covered with quilts and blankets with a brazier under it to heat the .legs and the body

living condition was so miserable that many people were even unwilling to enter such places as that. With utmost humbleness, the Shaykh went to him and after a warm greeting, he collected his unwashed and half-burnt clothes to wash and mend. Then the old man said to the Shaykh that his possessions had been lost and he had not :been able to carry on his job. Hearing this, the Shaykh turned to me and said

"!Give him something to restart his business with"

Respect for All People

The reverend Shaykh was respectful not only to the Sayyids but also to all other people. If someone made a mistake, he would not humiliate them in the presence of others. He never reproached someone for their flaws but treated them warmly and .amiably instead

Indifference to the Worldly Positions

During the later periods of his life, a number of elites gradually became familiar with the Shaykh who included not only some of the eminent figures of the Hawza and University, but also some political and military personalities as well who visited him for .various purposes

Despite all his humbleness and respect toward the poor, the oppressed, and particularly the Sayyids, the Shaykh was indifferent to the formal dignitaries and high-

.ranking officials

:When they used to visit his house, he would say

They have come to ask me for 'the hag'(۱); they are distressed, run-down, and they" have someone (around among their relatives) ailing. They come to me for du'a ".((supplication

The Shaykh's son said: "One of the generals who was devoted

The reverend Shaykh usually referred to the world as "the hag"; a term referred to -۱ in Islamic traditions as " 'ajuz". See also chapter three, part ۳, "The Pitfall of Love ".toward God

to my father once said to me: 'Do you know why! I love your father? It is because when the first time I went to visit him he was sitting next to the door in his room. I greeted him, then he said: "Go sit down!" I did so. A while later a blind man arrived; I saw that the Shaykh stood up, embraced him respectfully, and seated him near .himself

I was looking around the house to see what was going on when I noticed the blind" man rose up to leave. At the same time the Shaykh went ahead of him to help him put .on his shoes, and then placed ten tomans in his hand and the blind man left

When it was my time to say goodbye, however, he did not move from where he was (sitting and just said: "Khuda Hafiz!"(۱

Traveling Ethics In his blessed and outshining life, the Shaykh had made trips to Mashhad, Kashan, Isfahan, Mazandaran, and Kermanshah. The only travel he had outside Iran was to Iraq in order to make pilgrimage to the Holy Shrines there. From these trips, which were usually made in the company of his friends, that part of the memories and instructive points which are related to the traveling ethics are selected .and brought up in the present volume

According to the Shaykh's co-travelers, he had been good-natured, unfeigned in sincerity, and pleasurable to travel with. He never differentiated himself from his disciples and devotees. If some

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."Meaning, "goodbye -۱

luggage and provisions were supposed to be carried along the trip, he would carry his .portion and also paid his share of the expenses

((Awaiting the Faraj (Second Coming of Imam al-'Asr (aj

point

One of the Shaykh's outstanding features was his profound devotion to Hazrat Wali ' Asr (may our souls be sacrificed for him) and awaiting his holiness' faraj (advent) and :reappearance. He said

Many people state that they love Imam Al- 'Asr (aj) more than they love themselves'," whereas it is not so. For if we love him more than ourselves, we should work for him rather than for ourselves. Pray you all that Allah (s) may remove the obstacles and hindrances of his reappearance and maintain our hearts in line with his blessed ".heart

The Shaykh's Significant Demand

One of the Shaykh's friends related: 'In all the years I was at the service of the Shaykh, I never sensed that he had any other wishes than the faraj of Hazrat Wali 'Asr (aj). He would remind the friends not to demand from God anything except the faraj of "the Imam of Time" as far as possible. The state of awaiting was so strong in the reverend Shaykh that when someone would talk about the faraj of Wali 'Asr (aj), .he would get extremely moved and wept

How the Ant Strived to Reach the Beloved

The one important thing his reverence emphasized was the preparedness and being well-equipped by all those awaiting the reappearance of Imam al- 'Asr (aj), even though they do not live long enough to witness the time of that noble Imam's advent. He

:gave an account of Hazrat Dawood (a) as follows

While passing through a desert, His Holiness saw an ant picking some dust from a" small mound and carrying it to put in another place. He asked Allah (s) to inform him of the secret of this ant. ...The ant began to speak: 'I have a beloved who has set as a '!condition for my union with her the carrying of all dust from that mound to this place

How long will you be able to shift such big mound of dust to the required location?' After all, will your life be sufficient for that'? The Prophet Dawood (a) asked the ant. To which he answered: 'I know all this! But my joy is in that if I die in this way I will have died in the way of my beloved!' Hearing this, Hadrat Dawod got quite overwhelmed ".and figured out this story as a lesson for himself

:The reverend Shaykh always insisted that

With all your being (whole-heartedly) be awaiting Wali 'Asr (aj) and carry on this" " .state of awaiting while depending on Divine Dispensation

"(Give my Regards to that Holiness (aj"

One of his disciples said: 'He was always conscious of that noble Presence (aj), never saying the dhikr of Salawat without ending it with the phrase, "Wa 'ajjil farajahum. " '((Hasten his reappearance

His sessions were never held without homage to the Imam al- 'Asr (aj) and supplication for his reappearance. In the latter years of his life when he felt he would die

:before the Faraj, he would say to his friends

If you would find the honor to witness his (Holy Imam's) reappearance give my" ".regards to him

(The Purgatory State (Barzakh) of a Young Man Awaiting Imam Mahdi (aj

:During the burial of a young man, the Shaykh said

I saw Harat Imam Musa bin Ja'far (a) stretched his arms to embrace this young man." I asked (the people around) what his last word before dying was. They said it was this :poem

The awaiting ones are parting with their souls in their last breaths, O King of the' '"!noble, grant us your Succor

(The Second Coming of some of the People Awaiting Imam Mahdi (aj

The reverend Shaykh believed that those really awaiting Imam al-'Asr (aj) will return to the world after their death to accompany His Holiness (aj) upon his reappearance.(۱) Among the ones he named as those who will return to the world at the time of Imam's (aj) return are: Ali bin Ja'far buried in "Dar-i Bihisht" cemetery in .Qum, and Mirza Qummi in a Shaykhan cemetery in Qum

A Cobbler in Shahr-i Ray

One of the Shaykh's disciples said: 'Once I was in his presence and we were talking :about the faraj of Mawla Imam al-'Asr (aj) and the conditions of awaiting. He said

There was once in Shahr-i Ray a cobbler (apparently) named Imam Ali, an Azeri" speaking man with no wife and children, who lived in his workshop too. He has been described as being in very outstanding spiritual state. He did not demand anything but the faraj of Mawla Imam

This reminds me (the author) of Imam Khomeini (ra) whose blessed life ended with -١ regularly reciting the Du'a-i 'Ahd (supplication of the covenant), a supplication about which Imam al-Sadiq (a) said: "Whoever reads this covenant for forty mornings they will be ranked as our Qa'im's helpers and if he dies before reappearance of that Hazrat, God will raise him from his grave to be at the service of that Hazrat." See also .Mafatih al-Jinan

al- 'Asr (aj). He had specified in his will when he died to be buried at the foothill of Shahrbanu mount--on the outskirts of Shahr-i Ray. Whenever I directed my attention (toward his grave, I saw the Imam (aj) was there!"(١

Poetry

point

The reverend Shaykh was very interested in mystical and ethical poetry. His sermons were, most often, given along with instructive poetry .He especially valued the .Ghazals of Hafiz and the Mathnawi of Taqdis; he would cry when hearing their poetry

He was very fond of Mathnawi of Taqdis and would say: "If there were only one copy (of Taqdis in the market, I would give anything I had in order to buy that book"(٢

Dr. Abul Hasan Shaykh, a close acquaintance of the Shaykh for many years, said: 'The .Shaykh was an expert on Hafiz poetry and interpreted his poems quite well

About the reverend Shaykh's viewpoint concerning poetry and poets, particularly Hafiz, Dr. Hamid Farzam had this to say: 'Since ١٩٥۴, when I found the honor of friendship with the Shaykh through Dr. Guya, rarely a session would have been held in which I would not hear relevant, timely, and beautiful poetry from him. He was really fascinated by Hafiz. Once I asked him why he was so deeply interested in Hafiz. He :replied

In spiritual and mystical aspects, Hafiz has really done his best and expressed all" ".spiritual truths and mystical-intuitive findings in his poetry

The Shaykh was more dedicated to Hafiz than

۱- See "The Heart with which everything is Present", Chapter Three, Part ۳.

۲- One of Shaykh's devotees said: ' He recommended reading of "Taqdis" of Mulla Ahmad Naraqi and "Kimiyaye Sa'adat" of Ghazali.'

to other poets, and would always recite his poems even when he wished to warn or reproach someone.'(۱)

He always referred to the world as a "hag". Sometimes facing a disciple he would say:

"I see you have fallen again in the trap of this 'hag'!"

And then, he would recite this poem of Hafiz:

'There is none who is not entangled in that curling ringlet,

Who is there in the way of whom lies not such a snare of tribulation?'(۲)

He would also say ironically:

"Most often they get entangled in it, and very few are the ones who are detached from this hag!"

He would recite this fine couplet in condemning self-conceit:

'Being self-conceited and self-opinionated is infidelity toward being a dervish recluse,

The command is what You (God) ordain, the opinion is what You think of.'

Reciting (singing) Poetry in a Delightful Voice

Dr. Farzam said in this respect 'The late reverend Shaykh would recite poetry in a pleasant melody, for instance, certain poems of the late Fayz-e Kashani, such as the following couplets which would highly impress the listeners.

'I seek Allah's forgiveness of whatever (I have done for) other than the Beloved,

I seek Allah's forgiveness for my fictitious existence

,If a moment elapses without remembering his (beautiful) countenance

'I seek Allah's forgiveness myriad of times for that moment

One afternoon we were in the company of the Shaykh in one of his disciples' house. It had a very large guestroom and the Shaykh was sitting near the doorway singing the following couplet

p: ٣٧

.See "You Lose Temper too quickly!" Chapter Three, Part ٢ -١

٢ - All the poems and ahadith in this volume are rendered into English by the translator, except the ones adopted from other translated works which are referred .to in the footnotes

.of Hafiz

?Who is the one who, out of loving kindness, may practice sincerity to us'

'And) may do benevolence in lieu of ill-doing to such ill-doer as me)

He sang some couplets of this ghazal with a very beautiful and pleasant melody while weeping and making others extremely overwhelmed and tearful. It was so extraordinary! I said to Dr. Goya 'The reverend Shaykh has got such a lovely voice and !sweet breath

He replied. 'It is a pity you made such belated acquaintance with him He used to sing so beautifully that when he recited such poems in a mystical state, the doors and '.walls literally vibrated

A Poem by the Shaykh and Reminiscence

It seems that the Shaykh himself used to write poems occasionally. One of the contemporary maraji' who was a student of the great jurist and mystic, the late

Ayatollah Qadi (Allameh Tabataba'i's teacher) answered to my inquiry about Shaykh Rajab Ali Khayyat as follows: 'I met him in a session with Ayatollah Qadi in Najaf. In that session, he recited some poems in praise of Amir al-Mu 'minin Ali (a) each couplets beginning with the letters of abjad.(۱) He then recited another of his poems :as follows

Whatever Bounties You have granted to the whole Universe, All have You granted to ' '.me, plentiful and diverse

I was thinking that this was the most sublime interpretation of Divine Bounties and" ":thanksgiving to Him, until I came across this statement in al-Sahifah al-Sajjadiyya

شکری أیاک من انعاماتک

Shukri iyyaka min in 'amatika (I am"

۱- An arithmetical arrangement of the Arabic alphabet.

(thankful to You for all Your Bounties)(۱)

(An Amazing and Instructive Miraculous Act(۲)

At the end of the weekly session of "ethics" lesson(۳), a young man came forward and, referring to what was mentioned at the footnote No.۱ of this page, stated: "I am coming from Yazd. This issue was brought up in a meeting where some of those present ridiculed and said it was because of the Shaykh illiteracy that he did not know this phrase is not found in al-Sahifah al-Sajjadiyya! At that night, I saw him in a dream. :He said

What is quoted from me is not right. What I have said is as follows: 'And let my" atitude to Thee for what Thou hast not granted me be more abundant than my gratitude to Thee for what Thou hast bestowed upon me!'(۴) And this content does "!exist in supplication number ۳۵ of al-Sahifah al-Sajjadiyya

No doubt, this has been a true dream, since it is extremely important and essential to note that "it is a great blessing for man not to attain various worldly pleasures and luxuries which may divert him from sublime human goal; it is a great blessing that deserves much more gratitude and gratefulness than gratitude for the bounties that man has attained in the world." Also, finding such an issue from al-Sahifah al-Sajjadiyya in a dream without connection to the Unseen world is usually impossible.(۵)

Politics

point

The Shaykh was not involved in politics; however, he was strongly opposed to the detested Pahlavi regime

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۱ - Despite all the efforts made to identify this phrase in al-Sahifah al-Sajjadiyya. However, all the phrases in Supplication ۳۷ and the "Whispered Prayer of the Thankful" of Imam al-Sajjad (a) do testify to this notion.

۲- This title was later added to the eleventh edition of the Persian Version.

۳ - Weekly sessions of teaching ethics is held for a group of talabas (seminary students) from Hawzah 'Ilmiyya (Islamic Seminary) of Hadrat Abdul Azim al-Hasani (a).

۴- The Psalms of Islam, (al-Sahifah al-Sajjadiyya), supplication ۳۵, p. ۱۲۱, translated by William Chittick, Muhammadi Trust, London, ۱۹۸۸.

۵- It can be even said that this true dream somehow implicitly confirms other issues quoted from the reverend Shaykh in this book.

and the ruling statesmen. He was not only opposed to the Shah, but also disapproved Musaddeq. He praised, however, Ayatollah Kashani (ra) and said: "His inward aspect was similar to a fountainhead."

Two Political Predictions

One of the Shaykh's sons said: 'On ۳۰th of Tir, ۱۳۳۰ S.H. (July ۲۱, ۱۹۵۱) when the Shaykh

:'arrived in the house, he burst into tears and said

Hadrat-i Sayyid al- Shuhada put out this fire and prevented this affliction; many" people were intended to be massacred on this day. Ayatollah Kashani will not be ".successful (victorious), but there will come a Sayyid who will succeed

.(Later on his prediction turned out to be about Imam Khomeini (ra

The Future of the Islamic Revolution

Speaking of Imam Khomeini (ra), it is interesting to know his foresight concerning the .future of the Islamic Revolution

Mr. Ali Muhammad Bisharati-- former interior minister-- related that in the summer of ۱۳۵۸/۱۹۷۹, when he was in charge of the Intelligence Department of sipah-i pasdaran (Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps), he received a report on Mr. Shari'atmadari (a then dissident cleric) who had said in Mashhad: 'I will eventually declare war against '.(Imam Khomeini (ra

Mr. Bisharati said: 'I went to see Imam Khomeini (ra) and among other reports I informed him of what was said about him by Mr. Shari'atmadari. The Imam (ra) :listened with bowed head, and when I ended my talk, he raised his head and said

What are they saying? Our victory is guaranteed by Allah. We will be successful, and" set up an Islamic government and

p: ۴۰

".((hand over the banner to the rightful banner-bearer (Imam Mahdi (a

'?(I asked: 'Yourself (will hand it over

'.Imam (ra) kept silent and did not answer

Nasir al-Din Shah Qajar in the Purgatory World

One of the Shaykh's disciples related the following from him about the condition of

:Nasir al-Din Shah Qajar in the Purgatory State

His soul was set free on Friday, the evening of which he was being forced back to his" previous station. He was crying and begging the agents (who were escorting) him not to take him back. When he saw me he said: If I knew my place would be such as this I "!would never even imagine of having joy and pleasure in the world

Praising the Tyrannical Monarch

The reverend Shaykh would restrain his friends and disciples from collaborating with the ruling government (i.e., Pahlavi) particularly from praising and admiring them (the .(officials

:A disciple of the Shaykh quotes him as saying

I saw the soul of one of the pious people being tried in the Purgatory state, and all" the indecent actions perpetrated by his contemporary despotic ruler were being :ascribed to him. The man being tried protested

I have not done any of these crimes. He was replied: 'Did you not say in praise of him' '?that he provided the country with such wonderful security

'.He answered: 'Yes

He was told then: 'You were satisfied with his actions; he made all these crimes to ".'secure his kingdom

:In Nahjul-Balagha, Imam Ali (a) is quoted as saying

الراضی بفعل قوم کالداخل فیه معهم، وعلی

p: ۴۱

کل داخل فی باطل أثمان: أثم العمل به، وأثم الرضا به

Whoever is content with conducts of some other people, he is like the one who has" collaborated with them in those actions; and whoever perpetrates a falsehood two

(sins are recorded for him: One for doing it, and the other for being content with it."(1)

Cooperation with the American Military Attaches

One of the Shaykh's friends whose son was working with American attaches said: 'On a trip to Mashhad I was in the company of the Shaykh. Together with him we went to the Holy Shrine for a pilgrimage. He stood in a corner to recite the Ziyarat, talking to Imam al-Reza (a) the same way as I talk to you. After finishing the Ziyarat, he made a sajdah (prostration). When he raised up his head from sajdah, he called me (near himself) and said:

His Holiness (Imam al-Reza (a)) says: ' Prevent your son from pursuing that job," otherwise he will place a heavy burden on your back!"

We did not know that he had made arrangements with the Americans to go to the' U.S.A. About twenty five years ago,(2) one day my son came to me and said: 'I am going abroad and I have made -all the arrangements and even obtained my visa.' Whatever we did we could not avert his decision. When he finally left for the U.S.A., he wrote to us some time later that his wife was barren and that he was divorcing her. Since then we have gone through much

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1- Mizan al-Hikmah, VIII, ۳۷۱۴: ۱۲۷۴۸.

2- This interview took place on July I, ۱۹۹۶.

trouble because of him.

Part ۲: A Leap Forward

Divine Training

point

Spiritual stations and virtues of the reverend Shaykh are quite evident to all those who knew him closely or those who had listened to him in his sessions.(1)

The major question regarding the life of this great charismatic figure is that how he achieved such high human status. How a person, who lacked formal academic education and had no experience in Hawza (Islamic seminary), attained such high spiritual achievements that not only the general public but also educated scholars from Hawza and university enjoyed the blessings of his guidance? What was the secret of the reverend Shaykh's leap forward in his achievement? And finally: Who ?has trained him and who was his spiritual instructor

The Shaykh's Masters

Although the reverend Shaykh was lacking in formal knowledge commonly acquired at universities and Hawza centers, he had actually enjoyed the company of some great dignitaries in scholarship and spirituality .Some great scholars such as the Ayatollah Muammad Ali Shah Abadi -Imam Khomeini's (ra) teacher(۲) -and the late Ayatollah Mirza Muhammad Taqi Bafqi and the late Ayatollah Mirza Jamal Isfahani, (۳) were as his teachers. He also enjoyed the teachings of two other noble scholars: Agha Sayyid Ali Mufassir and Sayyid Ali Gharavi -the interpreter of the Qur'an and the .prayer leader at a Masjid in Salsabil neighborhood of Tehran

As a result of the same informal education, he (the Shaykh) had become quite familiar with the Holy Qur'an and Ahadith, and would translate and interpret the Qur'an, the

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۱- In chapter three of the same part, more will be said in this regard.

۲- Imam Khomeini (ra) repeatedly remembered and named the latter as his Ustad (master) in Divine Knowledge. See: Misbah al-Hidayah, XXVII,۴۶:۹۰.

۳- It is related that he is the brother of Haj Agha Nurullah Isfahani known as Agha Najati Iafahani. He was the prayer leader of the Masjid of Sayyid Azizullah in Bazaar of Tehran at the beginning of Reza Shah's reign. About his sermons, it is quoted from the late Shaykh Rajab Ali who said: "His minbars (sermons) produce lovers of God." Because of his opposition to Reza Khan, he was exiled to Isfahan where he was martyred and buried in "Takht-i Fulad" cemetery. Dr. Abul Hasan Shaykh said: 'Once

the reverend Shaykh and I went to Takht-i Fulad cemetery. We sat down beside a grave. The Shaykh said: "The man buried here had been my master." 'Hujjatul Islam Karimi has quoted Ayatollah Kazim Assar as narrating an interesting Karamat that Ayatollah Mirza Jamal Isfahani had been graced with by Amir al-Mu'minin Ali (a) as follows: Hadrat Ayatollah Assar was a great teacher of Asfar in Shahid Mutahhari Islamic Seminary (formerly called Sipahsalar), and I, Shaykh Karam Ali Karimi, passed the six year-course of the seminary with him and some other teachers. The first miracle about Mirza Jamal Isfahani was told to us at our Asfar lesson by Ayatollah Assar while he was shedding tears: "Hadrat Ayatollah Haj Agha Jama۱ Isfahani (ra), who was exiled by Reza Khan Pahlavi to Tehran and was the prayer leader of Masjid Haj Sayyid Azizullah in Bazaar, used to teach at Marvi Islamic seminary. His teaching in that Madrasa was so fascinating and rich in content that his classes were always overcrowded with scholars and learned students, to the extent that some of the prayer leaders felt highly envious toward him.' 'So the latter held a meeting in which they declared that he (Ayatollah Isfahani) was illiterate and deceived the clerics he had gathered around him. They made an arrangement to test Haj Agha Jamal in three topics: Philosophy, fiqh, and usul. I was assigned to test him in philosophy, i. e., Asfar, and two others-whose names I do not remember-were supposed to examine him in fiqh and usul. The three of us arranged to attend his class, sit at separate places, and each ask him our questions during his lessons.' I (Assar) had taken a copy of Asfar with me. When Haj Agha Jama۱ Isfahani was explaining a philosophical viewpoint, I brought up a question from Asfar finding fault with his viewpoint. He looked at me and said: "I did not answer your question in such a way. You go on and open Asfar at random (by the way of istikhara (bibliomancy)) and read the first of the page." I did so and read the top sentence of a page. He said: "That is enough" and then began to recite the whole page word by word by heart and translated it. Then he said: "You have come here to test me? I have nothing of my own; whatever I have is (bestowed on me) by the Mawla (Imam) of the pious, Ali ibn Abi Talib (a)." Then Haj Agha Jamal related an account of Amir al-Mu'minin Ali's (a) miracles: "I studied in Najaf for forty years, achieving the rank of ijtihad and high levels of scholarship. My father sent some of the scholars and traders from Isfahan to Najaf to bring me back to Isfahan to administer the Hawzah as head and chairman. The night after which we were

supposed to leave Najaf for Iran, all of a sudden I came down with typhoid fever and fell unconscious for forty days. When I regained consciousness, I found that I had forgotten all the things I had learned since childhood up to then; absolutely oblivious of all my accumulated knowledge. I got bitterly distressed and went to (the holy shrine of) Amir al Mu'minin Ali (a) and began to wail and lament, saying to my Mawla: "My lord! For forty years I acquired much scholarly provision from the widespread expanse of your 'ilm (Divine knowledge) but know that I want to return home, I am empty-handed. You are an ocean of Magnanimity." (The late Assar was crying while narrating.) Then the late Ayatollah Haj Agha Jamal said: "I wept and lamented so much that I felt drowsy and then fell asleep. (In my sleep) I saw the Mawla Ali (a) who put a fingertip of honey in my mouth and caressed me, and then I came to. When I returned home I found I knew by heart whatever I had learned from childhood to the present." After that' Haj Agha Jamal cried and said: "Sirs! I have nothing of my own. Whatever I know belong to my Mawla and Imam Amir al-Mu 'minin Ali (a). You do come and examine me; I know by heart all the texts by the Grace of Allah (s) and the favor from Amir al Mu'minin Ali (a). Mr. Assar was crying while he said: When Haj Agha Jama۱ stated this event, a commotion arose from among the gathering, and I got up '.and approached him to rub that nobleman's slippers on my eyes as a blessing

Ahadith, and supplications, presenting very fine and accurate comments of them that .others were less aware of

Thus, the reverend Shaykh's familiarization with the Islamic knowledge was due to his benefiting from the presence of such great dignitaries and their like. However, the beginning of his leap forward and spiritual development must be sought somewhere else, which was a turning point in his blessed life. That is, when the Shaykh said, "I had .no teachers", he was pointing out to this issue

One of his devotees quoted the Shaykh as having said: "I had no teachers, but I attended the sessions by the late Shaykh Muhammad Taqi Bafqi'[۱] held in the courtyard of Harat Abdul Azim's (a) holy shrine where he lectured in the evenings. He was a spiritual man. One night he addressed me among the audience and said: 'You ".'will attain a (high) station

To my opinion, the secret of the Shaykh's leap forward, beginning, of development, and his turning point in life lies in an event that is extremely impressive and instructive. In his early youth, something happened to the Shaykh that was very similar to what happened to the Prophet Yusuf (a). This event and what ensued was an example of the Shaykh's practical monotheism. It indicated that what the Holy :Qur'an says at the latter part of the story of the Prophet Yusuf (a) in the verse

انه من يتق ويصبر فان الله لايضيع أجر المحسنين

Behold, he that is righteous and patient-never will)

p: ۴۴

۱- The perfect ascetic and the practicing scholarly mujahid. Shaykh Muhammad Taqi Bafqi Yazdi who, as a result of a confrontation with Reza Khan on the issue of Kashf-i Hijab (Reza Khan's order to remove Qijab (veils) from the Iranian Muslim women), and after being beaten up by that despotic monarch in the holy shrine of Hazrat Ma'sumeh (a), he was exiled to Shahr-i Ray. He remained in exile there till the end of his life. Those who enjoyed close association with this Divinely endowed scholar, relate many miraculous acts performed by him. His servant, the late Shaykh Isma'il told me (the author): "In the latter years of his life, the Shaykh (Bafqi) was unable to leave home due to illness. Once he asked me: 'When you go for a ziyarat pilgrimage to Hazrat Shah Abdul Azim, do you make a ziyarat to all three Imamzadehs (grandchildren of Imams-(a)) or do you say Salam (pay homage) to the Imamzadeh Tahir while you are just passing by his tomb? In that era the development project of the holy shrine had not been carried out yet, and the shrine of Imamzadeh Tahir was located off the main site. I replied to him: 'I do not enter Imamzadeh Tahir for a ziyarat; rather I just make the pilgrimage from outside of his shrine. The Shaykh said: 'This is not decent. You fmd the audience with the three nobles, and you visit two of them closely but visit one from a distance?! This is considered disrespectful. The next time you go for a Ziyarat, go inside the shrine of Hazrat Tahir (a) and make your

Ziyarat give my regards to him too.' Shaykh Isma'il said: As recommended by the Shaykh, I entered the shrine 'of Hazrat Tahir (a). Nobody was inside the shrine; I remembered the Shaykh's bidding; I was about to say that he sent regards when all of a sudden I heard the phrase "Labbayk, Labbayk, Labbayk (here am I)!" from inside the darhi. " Also in his private teaching sessions and in order to encourage his students to meet with the late Bafqi who was in exile, Imam Khomeini (ra) would often recite this couplet: How joyful it is to attain double bliss with one act, Ziyarat of Shah .(Abdul Azim and visiting the beloved (the late Shaykh Bafqi

Allah let the reward to be lost, of those who do right.) (Yusuf: ٩٠), is a general rule and .(is not restricted only to the Prophet Yusuf (a

.This shows that what the Holy Qur'an says concerning the Prophet Musa (a) i.e

(ولما بلغ اشده واستوی اتیناه حکماً وعلما وکذلک نجزی المحسنین)

When he attained his full manhood, and was firmly established (in life) We gave him) power and knowledge: thus do We reward those who do right.) (al-Qasas: ١۴)(١), is also a general rule. From the viewpoint of the Holy Qur'an all the righteous and the benevolent people are endowed with the light of wisdom and specific Divine .knowledge

(A Story Similar to that of the Prophet Yusuf (a

The Shaykh had rarely told a full account of this event; however, he did on some :occasions make a brief hint at it

I did not have any ustad (master), but I said: O God! I refrain from this for the sake of" ".pleasing You, and I restrain myself in the hope that You train me only for Yourself

Referring to this story, the eminent faqih, Ayatollah Sayyid Muhammad Hadi Milani (ra) said: 'The Shaykh had been graced with blessings, and that was because of the .self-restraint he had practiced in his youth

The Shaykh himself had related this story in a meeting with that noble faqih. In the

meeting, Ayatollah Milani's Son, Hujjat al-Islam. Sayyid Muhammad Ali Milani, was (also present, who quoted the Shaykh telling the event as follows:(۲)

In my youth, a beautiful daughter of my relatives fell in"

It is worth mentioning that the same verse is repeated about the prophet Yusuf (a) -۱ .in sura Yusuf, ayah ۲۲ excluding the word istawa

The Shaykh had brought up some other points in this regard that will come up in the -۲ ".first chapter of part ۳: "Private Guidelines

love with me, and eventually found me alone in a desolate place. I said to myself: 'Rajab Ali! God can test you many times; why do not you test God once!? Restrain '!from this pleasurable unlawful act for the sake of God

:'Then I said to God'

"!O God! I refrain from this sin; and You train me for Your own in return"

Thereupon, like the Prophet Yusuf (a), he bravely resisted falling into the sinful .temptation, evaded the enticement, and promptly rushed away from the risky snare

This self-control and avoidance of committing sin led him to insight and intuition; his otherworldly vision enlightened, seeing and hearing what others could not see and hear. He got such clear an insight that whenever he went out of his house he would see some people as they really were, and some mysteries were revealed to him.(۱) :The reverend Shaykh is quoted as saying

One day I went from "Mawlavi" intersection through "Sirus" Avenue down to" "Galubandak" (a neighborhood in Tehran) and returned (the same way) and I saw just "!one human face

How he Received Divine Training

The invocation of an entrapped young man entreating: "O God! Train me for

Yourself!" was answered in that sensational situation and caused such a leap forward in the spiritual life of this holy young man that the superficial people are unable to comprehend. With this leap, Rajab Ali traveled in one night a one hundred-year-long distance (defying the limits set by space and time), and became renowned as "Shaykh

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.This had apparently happened to the Shaykh at the age of ۲۳ -۱

".Rajab Ali Khayyat

In the first step of Divine training, his eyes, ears, and heart opened up so that he could see beyond the world of matter and through the high Heaven the things other people could not see and hear what others could not hear .This esoteric experience prompted the Shaykh to believe that: ikhlas (sincerity and devotion) causes the eyes and the ears of the 'heart' to open up. He often asserted to his disciples:

".If one works for Allah, their heart's eyes and ears will open up"

The Eyes and Ears of the Heart

One may wonder here whether a heart can have eyes and ears. One may ask: Is man capable of seeing and hearing things by means other than the physical eyes and ?ears

The answer is, "yes", it is true. The Islamic hadiths- narrated by both Shi'as and Sunnis -have given positive answers to this question. Hereby, some examples are :given in this respect:(۱) The Holy prophet (s) said

"ما من عبد الا وله فی وجهه عینان یبصر بهما امر الدنیا، وعینان فی قلبه یبصر بهما أمر الآخره، فاذا أراد الله بعبد خیراً فتح عینیه اللتین فی قلبه، فأبصر بهما ما وعده بالغیب، فآمن بالغیب علی الغیب"

There is no servant (human being) except that they have two eyes on their faces to" see the worldly things with, and two eyes in their hearts to see the affairs of the Hereafter. Whenever God wants the good of a servant, He opens two eyes in their

hearts by which they can see His

p: ۴۷

.For further information of these ahadith, see: Mizan al Hikmah, X, ۴۹۸۸: ۳۳۹۰-۱ -۱

(promised bounties and believe in the Unseen through their unseen eyes."(۱

:And in another hadith, the Holy Prophet (s) said

"لولا تمزّع قلوبكم وتزيدكم فى الحديث لسمعتم ما أسمع"

If your hearts were not dispersed and you were not so loquacious, you would" (undoubtedly hear what I hear.(۲

:Similarly, Imam al-Sadiq (a) said

"ان للقلب أذنين: روح الايمان يساره بالخير، والشيطان يساره بالشر، فايهما ظهَر على صاحبه غلبه"

Verily the heart has two ears: the Spirit of Faith whispers good in one and the Satan" whispers evil in the other one. Thus, anyone of those that wins over the other will (dominate him."(۳

Help from the Unseen World

point

We read in Nahjul Balagha that Imam Ali (a) asserts that God Almighty throughout the history has meritorious servants to whom He talks through their mind and intellect. :The words of Imam (a) are as follows

"وما برِح لله – عزت آلاؤه – فى البرهه بعد البرهه وفى أزمان الفترات عباد ناجاهم فى فكرهم، وكلمهم فى ذات عقولهم، فاستصبحوا بنور يقظه فى الأبصار والأسماع والأفئده ..."

In all periods and times, particularly during the interregnum (the interval between" the coming of two prophets) there are persons with whom Allah-great are His bounties-whispers (through inspiration) into their minds and intellect, and illumines

(their heart's eyes and ears with the light of consciousness.(۴)

These competent servants of Allah are the ones who are thus described in "al-Munajat al-Sha'baniyya":

"الهی واجعلنی ممن نادیته فأجابک ولاحظته فصَعِقَ لجلالک فناجیته سرا وعمل لک جهراً"

"O Allah! Rank me among those who will answer you when You call

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۱- Mizan al-Hikmah, X, ۴۹۸۸: ۱۶۹۴۲.

۲- Ibid, X, ۴۹۹۰: ۱۶۹۵۶.

۳- Ibid, X, ۴۹۸۸: ۱۶۹۵۰.

۴- Nahjul Balagha, Sermon ۲۲۲.

them, and will fall unconscious by the manifestation of your Light when you look at them; You whisper to them secretly, and they work for You openly."

After being delivered from the traps of nafs-i ammara (the imperative carnal soul) and the satanic temptation and opening up of his heart's eyes and ears, the young tailor was ranked among such competent servants and from then on occasionally enjoyed inspirations from the Unseen, some received in dreams and some while awake, thus being graced with special guidance that is granted to the devoted and sincere mujahids (volunteers of faith).(۱)

This guidance is explained in a hadith quoted from the Holy Messenger of Allah (s):

"اذا أراد الله بعبده خيرا فقهه فی الدين، وألهمه رشده"

"Whenever Allah intends good for a person, He makes them expert in religious law and inspires them toward the right path.(۲)"

Penalty of a Disapproved Thought

One of the significant blessings of Divine guidance for those under His special training

:is awareness of one's own shortcomings. The Holy Prophet (s) is quoted as saying

"اذا أراد الله عز وجل بعبده خيرا فقهه فی الدین، زهده فی الدنیا، وبصره بعیوب نفسه"

Whenever Allah intends good for a person, He makes them expert in religious law," "(unwilling toward the world and aware of his own shortcomings.(۳

Having been directed on the path of Divine guidance, the young tailor enjoyed plenty .of such inspirations

:Ayatollah Fahri(۴) related that the reverend Shaykh had told him

One day I got out to the market for some business; an improper thought"

۱- (والذین جاهدوا فینا لنهدینهم سبلنا)(And those who strive in Our (Cause) -We will certainly (guide them to our paths.) (Al Mulk: ۶۹

۲- Mizan al-Hikma, IV, ۱۶۰۲: ۵۳۵۹.

۳- Ibid., IV, ۱۶۰۲: ۵۳۶۰.

۴- The representative of Wali Faqih and prayer leader of Masjid of Zainabiyyah in .Damascus. He has narrated the next account about the Shaykh, too

crossed my mind, but I repented right away. On the way, I saw a string of camels carrying in firewood from outside town. All of a sudden one of the camels gave me kick that if I hadn't pulled myself aside in time, it would severely hurt me. I went to the mosque with this question in my mind that where this event had originated from. I !?asked anxiously: 'O God! What was that

I was told intuitively: 'That was the outcome of what you thought. I said I did not "(commit any sin. I was responded: 'The camel's kick did not really hit you either.'(۱

(Threatened to a Destiny Like that of Balaam of Boer (Bal'am-i Ba'ura

Among the Shaykh's devoted disciples was also Ayatollah Agha Mirza Mahmud-Friday prayer leader of Zanjan-who was a scholarly student of Mirza Na'ini. Such a learned

scholar was highly impressed by the sincerity and brilliance of a detached person who .was lacking formal education

The Shaykh once said: "The Friday prayer leader of Zanjan came over along with some of the dignitaries from Tehran. He introduced the latter to me. Due to this visit I felt (with a sense of self-importance) that I attained such a high status that dignitaries .come to meet me

The night (of that same day) I had a strange state of mind, feeling so depressed. With imploring and beseeching God Almighty, my state of purity was restored. I got mindful that if this attitude had continued, what I would

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۱ - This account has been related in very slightly a different form by two of the .Shaykh's other devotees. The present account was narrated by Ayatollah Fahri

have done. How did it turn out this way?! I was engaged in such thought when I was shown Balaam of Boer(۱) and was told: If this (attitude) continued you would turn like him; the outcome of all your struggle and attempts was that you would associate with famous figures, enjoying the world and being deprived of the Hereafter. This event was over and done with. On Fridays, we had regular sessions. Once, the session took longer than usual and lasted until noon. The owner of the house and the other friends proposed to have lunch there, and I agreed. The next week again the session lasted until noon and once again the tablecloth was spread; naturally with more variety of foods this time. And this happened for several weeks. In one banquet with various foods and a best quality bar of butter in the middle of the tablecloth attracting everyone's attention. It crossed my mind that this banquet was for me, the meeting was held for me, and the other friends were invited for my sake, so I was prior to .others to have the butter

With this idea, I picked a little bread, and as soon as I reached for the butter, I saw ".Balaam of Boer in a corner of the room laughing at me! Then I held back my hand

"!?You are Satiated and your Neighbor is Hungry"

One of the Shaykh's disciples related that he had heard him say: "One night I dreamed that I had been found guilty and some agents came

p: ۵۱

۱- Balaam of Boer was a scholar, according to the Tafsirs, whose supplications were granted. He had twelve thousand disciples, but due to carnal desire and whims, he went to the aid of the despotic ruler of his time, to the extent that he got ready to curse the army of the Prophet Musa (a). He was likened to a dog, as referred to in the Qur'an: (His similitude is that of a dog: if you attack him, he lolls out his tongue, or if you leave him alone, he (still) lolls out his tongue.) فمثله كمثل الكلب ان تحمل عليه يلهث او تتركه يلهث (al-A'raf: ۱۷۶). See also: Tafsir al-Mizan, VIII, ۳۳۹; Tafsir Qummi, ۱, ۲۴۸; Munyat al-Murid, ۱۵۱.

over to take me to the prison. The next morning I was very upset, wondering what the cause of that dream had been. With the grace from the Almighty Allah I found out that the dream was somehow related to my neighbor. I asked my family to see into the matter and inform me about it. My neighbor was a bricklayer; it was found out that he had been out of work for several days and the night before he and his wife had nothing to eat and slept the night hungry. I was told (intuitively): 'Woe to you! You sleep full whereas your neighbor is hungry?' At that time, I had a saving of three abbasis in cash! Without any delay, I borrowed another abbasi from a grocer in the neighborhood and together with my savings gave it to the neighbor and requested him to let me know whenever he was jobless and penniless."

"!Love your Children for the Sake of God"

:Once the Shaykh said

"One night I found I was in veil(۱), and was unable to find my way to the Beloved. I tried to trace the origin of this veil. After long pleading and probing, I found it was the result of the feeling affectionor one of my children the evening before when I looked

at his (her?) face! I was told (intuitively) that I should love my child for the sake of God! "... .(So) I prayed God to forgive me for that (personal) affection

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۱- i. e., veiled inwardly and in darkness of soul.

The Veil of Eating Food beyond Need!

One of the Shaykh's devotees related about him that the Shaykh was once holding a session in one of his friends' house. Before starting his talk, he felt somehow weak due to hunger and asked for some bread. The householder brought him half a loaf of bread for him to eat, and then he started the meeting. The following night he said:

"Last night I made salutations to the holy Imams (a) but I did not see them. I pleaded to find the reason. I was told intuitively: 'You had half of that food and the hunger alleviated. Why then did you eat the other half?! Having some food enough for body's need is all right, but extra to that would cause veil and darkness."

Spiritual Perfections

point

There is a renowned hadith that the experts call "hadith-i qurb-i nawafil" (the hadith of proximity in supererogation).

Both Shi'a and Sunni scholars of hadith quoted, with a slight difference, the Holy Prophet (s) as saying:(۱)

"قال الله عز وجل: ... ما تقرب إلى عبـد بشـىء أحب الى مما افترضت عليه، وانه ليتقرب الى بالنافله حتى أحبه، فاذا أحببته كنت سمعه الذى يسمع به، وبصره الذى يبصر به، ولسانه الذى ينطق به، ويده التى يبطش بها، ان دعانى أجبته، وإن سألنى أعطيته"

"The Almighty Allah said: No servant is drawn nigh to Me except by means of what is more favorable to Me than what I have made obligatory to them. Verily, he approaches to Me by nafila (supererogatory prayers) to the extent that

.See Mizan al- Hikmah, X, ۴۸۵۶: ۳۳۳۰ -۱

I get to love him; in that case, I will become his ears to hear with, his eyes to see with and his tongue to speak with, and his hand to strike with. If he calls Me, I will answer (him and if he makes a request from Me I will grant him"(۱

What is meant by "nafila" in the ahadith-i qurb-i nawafil, which follow the obligatory prayers, consist of good and righteous deeds, which expedite man's flight toward .absolute perfection and the Sublime Destination of humanity

One can, accordingly, through performance of good deeds for God's sake get closer and closer to absolute perfection; and at the peak of servitude, his eyes would not see except for the sake of God, his ears would not hear except for the sake of God, his tongue would not talk except for the sake of God, and his heart would not yearn .except for the sake of God

In other words, by submerging your will in the Will of Allah (swt)--as put in the ahadith-i qurb-i nawafil--God will become your eyes, ears, tongue and heart; and you .will eventually attain the essence of servitude and Divinity

:According to the reverend Shaykh

If the eye works for God, it becomes Eye of Allah, if the ear works for God it becomes" Ear of Allah, if the hand works for God, it becomes Hand of Allah, and so forth to the :heart of man, which is God's place; as narrated

"قلب المؤمن من عرش

.Al-Kafi, II, ۳۵۲: ۷; Mizan al-Hikmah, X, ۴۸۵۸: ۱۶۶۲۷ -۱

الرحمن"

"(The heart of a believer is the Throne of Allah, the compassionate.(۱"

:And as Imam Husayn (a) says

"جعلتَ قلوبَ أوليائکَ مسکناً لمشيتک"

"(O Lord! You made Your lover's hearts the station of Your Will and Providence.(٢"

Accurate and fair probing into the Shaykh's spiritual states indicates that, after the enormous leap he made in his youth as a result of rejecting the lustful temptation; and as an outcome of Divine training and the inspirations and assistance granted to him from the Unseen, he achieved such high levels of spiritual virtues. Perhaps, this was the secret of his great interest in the following poems which he frequently :whispered

In the school of Eternity, it was Your Beauty that guided me; Your Grace aided me to " ".be trapped in your (Divine) Snare

My vile carnal soul yearned for any falsehood; Your Gracious Emanation liberated" ".me from its grips

Absorbed in Monotheism

One of the Shaykh's close disciples who had been associating with him for about thirty years said: 'On the recommendation of the Shaykh I went to visit Ayatollah (Kuhistani?(٣

The late Ayatollah Kuhistani once said about the Shaykh: 'Whatever the late Shaykh Rajab Ali Khayyat was granted (spiritually), was due to his fine monotheism; he was .absorbed in monotheism

(The Station of Fana (Annihilation

Dr. Hamid Farzam who has enjoyed the reverend Shaykh's sessions, described him as follows: 'His reverence Shaykh Rajab Ali Nikuguyan (May God's Mercy be upon him) was a detached ascetic who had achieved union with God. He had, out of purification ,of nafs and inward purity

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.Bihar al-Anwar, LVIII, ۳۹ -۱

.Muhaj al-Da'wat, ۶۸; Bihar al- Anwar, LXXXV, ۲۱۴ -۲

One of the eminent scholars that the Shaykh frequently visited was Ayatollah - ۳ Kuhistani about whom the Shaykh said: "From Agha Kuhistani a light is emitted that rises into the heaven." In one of the visits, the late Ayatollah Kuhistani accompanied the Shaykh to the side of the road --about a kilometer away from his residence --in order to see him off. Some years later when the Shaykh's words about Ayatollah Kuhistani was related to him, he humbly said: Those days we had (various kinds of) dhikrs (remembrances of God). It is worthwhile here to read a miraculous act about Ayatollah Kuhistani. Hujjat al-Islam. Agha Sayyid Qasim Shuja'i, an eloquent preacher, told me (the author): 'Agha Sadra'i Ishkiwari, a preacher in Rasht, was afflicted with a heart disease. He was transferred from Rasht to Tehran and hospitalized in Aban Hospital. One day the late Agha Falsafi called me and asked me to visit him together in the hospital. When we got there and after greeting, Agha Falsafi asked him: 'What is your (financial) condition like?' "The bounty from Sayyid al-Shuhada Imam Husayn (a) is running us (providing for our livelihood)." He answered. 'We all enjoy Sayyid al-Shuhada's bestowal', said Agha Falsafi. To which Agha Sadra'i replied: 'Ours is a different account!' Mr. Falsafi curiously inquired more. Agha Sadra'i explained: 'I have got a piece of tea growing garden bestowed on me by Sayyid al-Shuhada and the yield provide for my old age and retirement.' Agha Falsafi asked: 'How do you know it is bestowed on you by Sayyid al-Shuhada?' He answered: 'I had made a preliminary agreement to sell this garden. Two days later I paid a visit to Ayatollah Kuhistani. When I entered he said: 'Sadra'i! Why are you selling the 'atiyyeh Mulukaneh (regal bestowal)?' I said to him: 'Agha I have nothing to do with the Shah! 'He said: 'I do not mean that, I am talking about our Imam Sayyid al-Shuhada; these (dynasty of Pahlavi) have stolen the term ('atiyye Mulukaneh). Do you remember when as a youth you visited the holy shrine of Sayyid al-Shuhada and whispered to him through the grits of his Zarih, saying: 'O Imam Sayyid al Shuhada! Do me a favor so that at my retirement I'll be living on your bestowal'? This garden is the answer to that request, why did you deal it?" I kissed his (Ayatollah Kuhistani's) hand, got out of his house,

took a car back to Rasht, and tore up the document of preliminary agreement; and my livelihood has been sustained with by this garden up until the present.' I (Shuja'i) got deeply impressed (by that account). I decided to meet with him (but I didn't manage). It was time for Hajj and I was appointed as the clergyman of the Hajj caravan. There was a doctor in our caravan named Dr. Tahmasbi. I told him how I had in mind visiting Agha Kuhistani but I could not until then. He said that he was his physician. I got very glad and asked him to promise to take me to him as soon as we get back to Iran. He said when we left Iran he (Ayatollah Kuhistani) had been seriously ill. I was very worried until we went from Makka to' Arafat, where I began to quietly recite the supplication of 'Arafa, pondering on the content and the meanings. When I reached the phrase, "'amiat 'aynun la tarak" (may the eye that does not see You be blind!), my heart broke and tears rolled down my cheeks. I said: 'O God! I know I have nothing of value to offer, but one thmg I sure have and that is my siyadat (being a Sayyid). I leave it to you in pledge: I swear You to the rights and dignity of our forefathers to grace this servant of Yours--Ayatollah Kuhistani-- with healing. When we returned to Iran, I didn't happen to visit Ayatollah Kuhistani. I went to Mashhad. It was ۱۱:۳۰ p.m. when in Dar al-Siyada (porch of the holy shrine of Imam al-Reza (a)) I saw an old man coming in being supported by two other men holding him by his arms. I asked who he was, and they said: 'Agha Kuhistani." I had not seen him before. I approached him, greeted him, and bowed to kiss his hand. As I bowed down, he laid his hand on my right shoulder and said: "Shuja'i, may God grant you a blessed long life! Your supplication in' Arafat reached (saved) me!" I broke out in a sweat just as I heard that. I sat down right there. My wife asked: 'What happened? I said: Nothing just let me sit down for a while. And I sat for about half on hour. Agha Ray Shahri! Only God was witnessing in Arafat and nobody else was there when I prayed to God for him. This was a miraculous act I remember from him. I prayed for him in ' Arafat in total solitude as a drop of tear rolled down my face on the book I was holding in my hand, and he said to me in the Holy shrine of Imam al-Reza (a) that he received my .du'a (that I made for him) in Arafat. It was a strange memory in my life

attained the status of fana fi Allah, and baqa bi Allah (subsistence in Allah); and by means of acting according to legal ordinances and spiritual path-faring through

stations and states of spiritual discipiine, he joined the origin of Truth, graced with the '.Blessing from Almighty God

The Lover of God

Another of the Shaykh's disciples had the following description about him: 'The late Shaykh was from among those whose beings are captivated by God. He was literally unable to see anything except God; whatever he saw was God; whatever he said was about God. His first and last word was God, for he was in love with God. He was in love both with God and Ahl al-Bayt (a); whatever he said was about them. Being sacred is apart from being a lover. Shaykh Rajab 'Ali was a lover. His art was the Love of God and work for God. Those who are Divinely in love; their eyes display that love; his '.eyes were not like ordinary ones, he seemed to see nothing but God

The reverend Shaykh considered as sinful taking pleasure in anything except in God. Once in a very hot summer day, the Shaykh blew (some air onto his face with) a :manual straw fan to cool off a little. As soon as he felt cool, he said at once

"وأستغفرك من كل لذه بغيرك ذِكرك ومن كل راحه بغير أنسك ومن كل سرور بغير قربك ومن كل شغل بغير طاعتك."

O God! I pray forgiveness from Thee for every pleasure but"

p: ۵۶

remembering Thee, every ease but proximity with Thee, every happiness but "(nearness to Thee every occupation but obeying Thee!(۱

Another of his disciples, described the Shaykh's love of God as follows: 'The Shaykh was so enamored of God that in his presence nothing but talking about his beloved would be allowed to come up, except of course for some necessary subjects of daily matters. Sometimes he referred to the story of Layli and Majnun, in which Majnun was never interested to hear anything but about Layli. It was related that someone ?asked Majnun: Is Ali (a) rightful or 'Umar

:To which he answered: ' Layli is rightful! , He (the Shaykh) would say

".Even if this story is not real, it may be fitting to drive home the (latent) reality in it"

The Greatest Status

The young tailor, in his intense love of God and perfection of sincerity, was granted the Supreme Status and the Sublime Destiny. Thus, as asserted by the Ahl al-Bayt (a), he achieved the virtues and stations of people of cognition (those endowed with Divine Knowledge) through a way other than the common ways. Imam al-Sadiq (a) is :quoted as saying

"ان أولى الألبـاب الـذين عملوا بـالفكره حتى ورثوا منه حب الله – الى ان قـال – فـاذا بلغ هـذه المنزله جعل شـهوته ومحبته فى خـالقه، فـاذا فعـل ذلـك نزل المنزله الكبرى فعـاين ربه فى قلبه، وورث الحكمه بغير ما ورثه الحكماء، وورث العلم بغير ما ورثه العلماء، وورث الصدق بغير ما ورثه الصديقون. ان الحكماء ورثوا الحكمه بالصمت،

p: ۵۷

Mafatih al-Jinan, Munajat al-Dhakirin, Munajat No.۱۵. English translation adopted -۱ from: The Psalms of Islam (al-Sahifah al-Sajjadiyya), The Whispered Prayer of the .Remembers, part XIII, ۲۵۶

وان العلماء ورثوا العلم بالطلب، وان الصديقين ورثوا الصدق بالخشوع وطول العباده"

The wise people are those who put their thought in work by means of which to" acquire Love of God. When they reach this status--the holy Imam (a) went on to say-- they set their desire and love toward their Creator, and thereby they reach the highest status, find their Lord in their hearts, and obtain wisdom not through the way the sages obtained, and find knowledge not through the way the scholars found, and achieve Sidq (sincerity) not through the way the pious achieved. The sages found sagacity by silence, the scholars found knowledge by seeking, and the pious attained (piety and sincerity through humility and long-term worship.(۱

Finding Way into all Worlds

One of the Shaykh's devotees who had been closely asociating with him for so many years wrote about the Shaykh's spiritual achievements: 'As a result of his great love in

Almighty God and the Ahl al-Bayt (a), there remained no veil between him and God. He had access to all "worlds". He would talk to all the souls residing in Barzakh (Purgatory World) since the beginning of creation up to the present. He would "see", by his own will, whatever anyone had done in their whole life and would tell the signs,(۲) and would reveal what he willed and would be allowed to.

!(Visiting the Malakut (the Celestial Kingdom

Visiting the Malakut of the heavens and the earth with the eye of the heart is a prologue to attaining the high

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۱- Mizan al-Hikmah, II, ۹۶۰: ۳۱۵۹.

۲- An example of such accounts is related to my (the narrator's) first trip to the Holy City of Makkah. See "The Only Place Where they Displayed Affection to You", chapter Nine, Part ۳.

status of intuition of certitude.

وکذلک نری ابراهیم ملکوت السموت والأرض ولیکون من الموقنین))

So also We show Abraham the power and the laws of the heavens and the earth, that) (he might (with understanding) have certitude.) (Al An'am: ۷۵

:The Holy Prophet (s) is quoted as saying

"لولا ان الشیاطین یحومون علی قلوب بنی آدم لنظروا الی الملکوت"

If it were not that devils are dominant over the hearts of human beings, they would" "(be witnessing the Malakut.(۱)

All those who have been delivered from the snares of nafs and Satan, by tearing apart the heart's veils, are able to observe the Malakut of the heavens and the earth, and to bear witness to the Oneness of the Sacred Essence of God.

(شهد الله أنه لآ اله الا هو والملئکه وأولوا العلم)

There is no God but He: That is the witness of Allah, His angels, and those endowed (with knowledge...) (Ale Imran: ۱۸

One of the Shaykh's disciples related: 'I asked the late Haj Muqaddas(۲) whether the following hadith attributed to the Holy Prophet (s) is correct:

"لولا ان الشیاطین یحومون علی قلوب بنی آدم لنظروا الی الملکوت"

"If it were not that devils are dominant over the hearts of human beings, they would be witnessing the Malakut."

'He answered: 'Yes.'

I asked: 'Do you see the Malakut of the heavens and the earth?

'No, but Shaykh Rajab Ali Khayyat does!' He replied.

The Shaykh at the Age of Sixty

It is related by the late Shaykh ' Abdul Karim Hamid that the Shaykh (Rajab Ali) was in such

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۱- Mizan al-Hikmah, X, ۴۹۸۸: ۱۶۹۴۵.

۲- One of the famous preachers in Tehran who was rightfully a man of piety and sanctity.

a state of mind at the age of sixty that whenever he willed he would understand what he wished to.(۱)

The great Difference Between our Knowledge and his

Dr. Hamid Farzam said: 'I usually visited the reverend Shaykh on Thursday evenings and attended his public sessions for prayers and supplications. Until I found I had

questions that I needed to put to him privately, so it crossed my mind to have .audience with him in the middle of the week

A Monday afternoon I went to see him to ask some questions. It was a very nice day, as the late Hujj. Dr. Muhammad Muhaqqiqi, a university professor and the representative to Ayatollah Burujirdi was also present in his session. He was a brilliant figure whom I had not met or known till then. Anyway, I asked for permission, sat down, and enjoyed a lot the scholarly discussions of those two noble characters. Earlier in the evening at the end of the session, Dr. Muhaqqiqi said goodbye and left and I bid farewell too and followed him out of the house. In the alley, I said to him that I liked to get more acquainted with him. He said: "I am (Mr.) Muhaqqiqi and I am a teacher." I said I came to see the Shaykh to benefit from his presence (and knowledge), and I see you are, thanks God, very learned--intending to see what he had to say. He said: "No, sir. My knowledge is of the bookish kind and all memorized. You should see for yourself

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۱- The author of "Two Treatises on the Recent History of the Mysticism in Iran" (Du risalih Dar tarikh Jadid tasawwuf-i Iran), (Manuchehr Saduqi) writes on page ۱۰۳ under the title "A Note": The compiler said pertinently: 'I heard from Mr. Mudarrisi saying that earlier in his studying at faculty of science (of Tehran University) he and several of the professors there sometimes attended the weekly sessions of the late Shaykh Rajab Ali Khayyat (ra). He (Mr. Mudarrisi) would ask him some difficult questions on physics such as magnetic field, etc., and the Shaykh would say: "I will ask and answer (you)." Then he would lower his head in deliberation and a while later .would raise his head and give the right answer to his questions

what a high position the Shaykh has attained; he sees many things and knows many :things that are incomparable to what I know." I asked: 'How come?' He said

The first time I had an audience with him, the first thing he asked me after greetings" was about my job. I said: I am a teacher. He asked: "Apart from teaching?" I replied: "I

am a university professor and teach." He said: "No, I see you deal with a global object!" I was shocked to hear that and answered: "Yes, I do make geographical ".globes for livelihood and nobody knows about that

Confirming Dr. Muhaqqiq's views, Dr. Farzam goes on with his memories about the reverend Shaykh: 'There are lots of things to say that if I were to count it would come to many volumes. The reverend Shaykh, due to his purified soul and inner sincerity, would simply see things and would plainly state them without needing-as the Sufis put it-"to be emerged in the sea of revelations", so that he has often said explicitly in the :presence of his disciples

Friends! God has graced me with the blessing of seeing the Barzakhi (of intermediate" ".world) body of people

:I have some other memories of the same nature to tell

Helping out the Hard-Working Laborer

A) There was an industrious and honest worker named Ali Qudati from Azerbaijan who used to work for the neighbors and sometimes worked in our house as well and got paid for it. Both in summer and winter he would

p: ۶۱

wear a long military coat. Having not ever seen him, the Shaykh once told me :unprecedentedly

That tall man who wears military coat and comes to your house sometimes to help, is" "!poor and has a large family, you should help him more

"!You Lose Temper too quickly"

B) One Thursday morning I left home sulkily. In the evening, I went to the Shaykh's house for evening Prayer; all the friends were gathered waiting for the adhan (call to prayer) and the Shaykh was sitting in a corner. As soon as he saw me, he faced me and said: "You lose temper too quickly!" Then, shaking his head in contempt and

:surprise, recited the following couplet by Hafiz

!(Under His sword of sorrow, you ought to go on dancing (cheerfully'

'For the one who was killed by Him, would be granted a happy ending

!And I immediately found out my own fault

"!I See the Hair on his Head and Face is Growing Grey"

C) About forty years ago I had some heart trouble and I got somewhat scared. I told ... .Dr. Goya that my heart was not in a good condition and would possibly

It seemed that he told the reverend Shaykh about my heart condition and he had :commented

".He should not be worried, I see the hair on his head and face is growing white"

:And he had apparently proceeded to say

".He will live on well through his seventies"

Now, thanks God, I am over seventy years old. Such accounts are too many to bring up here; however, I further point

p: ۶۲

out very briefly some accounts that rate much higher than intuitive vision of state of :affairs

Contact with the Souls of Dr. Farzam's Parents

D) It was around ۱۹۵۸, i. e., later in the blessed life of the Shaykh, and I was appointed to go to Punjab University in Lahore Pakistan to teach Persian language and literature. One afternoon I went to see him for consultation. Speaking by conjecture, I said: Your reverence! I have come to you to consult with you whether to go to Pakistan; and .request you, if possible, to consult my parents in this respect, too

"!The reverend Shaykh said: "Send Three Salawat

Then he began talking to them, and at the end, he was driven to tears. Getting upset, I said: ' If I had known you would get disturbed and wept, I would not have asked you .to contact my parents

:He said

No sir! I asked them about the reappearance of Hazrat Hujjat Imam Mahdi (aj), and" ".my weeping was in that relation

:Then he gave me some evidence of my father's countenance and went on to say

Your mother was wearing a chador (Islamic modest covering) and was talking in" ".Kermani dialect some of which I did not understand

I confirmed: 'that's right your reverence! If they speak in Kermani accent, some of '.their words cannot be recognized by you

:The Shaykh said

All in all, their last word was that you should not go to Pakistan; and why should you" "!?go anyway

And, of course, I did not happen

'.to go; their words and those of the reverend Shaykh came true

How a Relation was established between Dr. Shaykh and Shaykh Rajab Ali

The reverend Shaykh's son quoted the late Dr. Abul Hasan Shaykh(۱) talking about his first acquaintance with the reverend Shaykh as follows: 'The reason for my getting familiar with the late Shaykh Rajab Ali Khayyat was the event of my wife having gotten lost for a couple of months. The more we looked for her the less we found a sign of her; we even visited some spiritualists, but to no effect. In our utmost despair,

someone gave me the Shaykh's home address, and that was the first time that I had :an audience with him. When he saw me, he pondered for a while and then said

".Your wife is in America and she will return in two weeks do not worry"

.He was quite right. My wife was in America and returned in due time

After this event, most of the days after work at the university; I would call on the Shaykh, and then went home

The late Dr Shaykh said in an interview made with him on August ۲, ۱۹۹۶ concerning (compilation of) this volume 'Once we went to "Pass Qal'a" in his company We had hired a donkey for him to ride on and I was walking in front leading the donkey I was thinking to myself 'What do I want professorship of university for? If I want to become a full Professor all I need is to walk in his shadow (follow

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".He is known as "The Father of Chemistry in Iran -۱

him) to become like him When I went to Karbala with him, we had gone to a bathhouse with him and I rubbed his back with a Turkish rubbing glove How '!pleasurable it was to be with him

"!The Automobile is All Right, Move on"

Dr Thubati said 'One day the reverend Shaykh together with Mr. Mirza Sayyid ' Ali and Agha Akrami were waiting in the bus station to go to mount "Bibi Shahrbanu(۱)" There were too many passengers waiting there. The first bus arrived and the reverend :Shaykh said

"We are not destined to get on this one"

The bus filled up and left. The second bus came and the Shaykh said the same again. The passengers rushed to the bus and got on, but tbe Shaykh and his friends were left behind. The third bus arrived, but this time too the crowd rushed on and the Shaykh

and his companions did not happen to get on. The bus driver tried to get the bus started up, but whatever he tried the bus failed to start! Finally, the driver told the .passengers to get off as the bus had stalled; and they did so

The reverend Shaykh said to his companions: "Get on the bus now!" And they got on '!the bus; the driver said: 'The bus is stalled and it does not get started sir

:The Shaykh said

".Nothing is wrong with it let's set off"

The driver sat behind the wheel, started and the bus got started up. At this moment, the other

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,A mountain near Shahr-i Ray -۱

passengers got on and we set off. On the way the bus conductor began collecting the fares and when he reached us, he refused to get fare from us three, but we disagreed. At last the conductor said: ' I will not get fare from that one-pointing to the '!Shaykh

Your Request is granted

Agha Haj Sayyid Ibrahim Musawi Zanjani(۱) said: 'In February ۱۹۵۶, I traveled to Baghdad together with my family, on a mission as the Deputy of the Iranian Passport Office. Two days before the coup d'etat in Iraq my family and I returned to Iran but my mother and son stayed on in Kazmayn. Two days later, the news about the coup d'etat in Iraq spread around and the borders were closed, making me extremely upset about my mother and son who were left behind in Iraq. I frequented the Iraqi Embassy to get the latest news, while applying for a visa to go back to Iraq. There were many others who were in the same situation as I was, and would refer to the .embassy but to no effect

Hearing the bothering news (about the situation in Iraq) made me more deeply tense and worried. Those days coincided with the month of Muharram; so I went to Qum for Ziyarat. It was already dark when I got into the Holy shrine of Hadrat Ma'suma (a). I went right to the upper part of the zarih and began to supplicate importunately and lament while reciting the "Special Salawat" dedicated to Holy

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.Son-in-law to the late Ayatollah Sayyid Mahmud, Friday prayer leader of Zanjan -۱

Imam Musa bin Ja'far (a) and entreating that noble Imam (a) to help my getting visa. I returned to Tehran two days later. One of my colleagues, the late Ahmad Fayd Mahdawi, wanted to make an arrangement for his cousin named (the late) Hujj. Haj Agha Ziya'uddin Fayd Mahdawi to meet with the reverend Shaykh. Together with him (Haj Agha Ziya'uddin), we went to the Shaykh's house. When we got there, we were guided into a room that was half carpeted and was very simply furnished. The Shaykh asked us to recite the Sura of Tawhid seven times. He believed in the number seven very strongly. Then, he started to speak; and while busy giving guidance and advising, :suddenly and unprecedentedly he faced me and said

You had a very good pilgrimage and your request had been granted; the effects are" "!!evident. Pray for me too

I asked the Shaykh which pilgrimage he was talking about. He said: "The pilgrimage to .Qum." And then went on with his advice

(Cursing Causes Darkness (of the Heart

:In the meantime, he said to the late Haj Agha Ziya'uddin Fayd Mahdawi

"!!Do not curse so much! Cursing so much causes darkness; pray, instead"

'!And the latter replied: 'Obeyed

This admonition, obviously irrelevant to the discussion going on, was ambiguous to

me. The next day, I brought up the subject with my colleague, Agha Ahmad Fayd '?Mahdawi, and asked him: 'What was the story of the cursing by Haj Agha Ziya'uddin

,He explained: 'My cousin

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i.e., Haj Agha Ziya'uddin, has a son who has got atheistic ideas; and he curses him (his '!son) after every prayer

As for my request having been granted as mentioned by the Shaykh, when I referred to the Iraqi Embassy two days later, as soon as the related officer saw me he said: Give me your passport to stamp it for a visa! Then he stamped my passport with a stamp having old Royal logo on it and then crossed out the word "Malik" (Imperial) and wrote "Jumhuri" (Republic) above it. This sounded very surprising to the other .clients who where applying for a visa too

Having received the visa, I left for Baghdad; and later on it turned out that before me .only an American journalist had been admitted into Baghdad

The Effect of Humility toward People for God's Sake

One of the Shaykh's disciples related (quoting a friend): The late Agha Murtada Zahid :was being laid in his grave pit, the reverend Shaykh said

The Nakirayn (the two angels interrogating the dead persons in their tombs) were" immediately addressed by God Almighty: Leave that servant (of Mine) to Me; do not bother him... He has all his life been humble with people for My sake; he did not feel ".any vanity

Talking to Plants

:One of the Shaykh's disciples quoted him as saying

The plants are alive too and they talk. I speak to them and they tell me about their" ".properties

The Reward for the Inventor of Electric Fan

:One of the Shaykh's disciples quoted him as saying

Once a small electric fan was brought to me"

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as a gift; I saw (intuitively) there was a fan placed before its inventor in the Hell-- ".(actually he meant) Barzakh

This intuition is confined by the hadith that suggests that although the unbelievers do not go to paradise, but if they had done good things they would be rewarded. In a :hadith by the Holy Prophet (s) we read

"ما أحسن محسن من مسلم ولا كافر الا أثابه الله. قيل: ما إثابه الكافر؟ قال: ان كان قد وصل رحماً، او تصدق بصدقه، او عمل حسنه، أثابه الله تعالى المال والولد والصحه وأشباه ذلک. قيل: وما إثابته فی الآخره؟ قال: عذاب دون العذاب، وقرأ: (أدخلوا ءال فرعون أشد العذاب)"

Whoever does good, whether a Muslim or an unbeliever, God will reward him." His" Holiness (s) was asked: 'What is rewarding an unbeliever like?' The Holy Prophet (s) replied: "If they have had regard for kinship or given alms or done any good, God Almighty would grant them wealth, children, and health in reward to their good deeds.(1) " He was (further) asked: 'How will they be rewarded in the Hereafter?' The Holy Prophet (s) replied: "They will receive less severe punishment. Then he recited this verse from the Holy Qur'an: (Cast the people of Pharaoh into the severest burning (fire!) (Al Nur: ۴۶

Conditional Fulfillment of Supplication

One of the Shaykh's friends related: 'A disciple of the Shaykh could not have children. Whatever he did was to no effect, until in a session-in which I was present too-he :asked the Shaykh for a solution, saying

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.Mizan al-Hikmah, II, ۶۶۲: ۲۲۱۳ -۱

.I want a child to bequeath from me after my death'

:The Shaykh responded

"I will reply to you later on"

Some time elapsed and I was not informed of what answer the Shaykh gave to him. Until one day he invited me to a banquet. I asked him the occasion for the banquet. He replied that he had been granted a daughter. Recalling that session with the Shaykh, I asked him: 'Was the Shaykh's prayer answered?' He said: 'On some condition of course.' I asked: 'How come?' He explained: 'He (the Saykh) made me commit myself to take a calf to the village "Imam Zadeh Hasan" - a village near Shahr-i Ray -on the birthday of my daughter and slaughter it (as a sacrifice) to be distributed among the .people there. And now is the first year of that commitment

This continued for seven years. In the eighth year, however, the father was abroad .and he could not fulfill his commitment. The same year the child died

After this event, he was very frustrated. I intended to go to the Shaykh's house and asked him if he would like to go there too. He agreed, and I went a little earlier and told the Shaykh that such and such is upset for the death of his daughter. The Shaykh :said

What shall I do? Is not the fulfillment of commitment one of the first conditions for" ".being a Muslim? He did not fulfill his commitment

,Then our friend arrived

:and the Shaykh made a little joking with him, saying

Do not be sad! God has granted you several palaces in paradise, instead; just be" "!careful not to ruin them

After the Shaykh's death, someone related to one of his sons: 'I had sold my house and planned to deposit the money in the bank, but it was closed. So I took the money home, and it was stolen in the nighttime. I pursued the matter at the Crime Investigation Department, but they could not help me there. I pleaded with Imam al ' Asr (aj). On the fortieth night of my pleading, I was given in a dream the address to the Shaykh's house. I went to the Shaykh's house early in the morning and told him :my problem. He said

"!I am not a soothsayer or a fortune teller; you have been wrongly informed"

I said: I swear to my forefather (meaning a Holy Imam (a), for he was a Sayyid) that I will not leave you. The Shaykh hesitated for a while, took me inside his house, and then said: "Go to Varamin (a city near Tehran), to such-and-such a village in such-and-such a house in which there are two rooms. Your money, wrapped intact in a red silk handkerchief, is placed beside an oven. Take the money and leave the house. They (i.e., the people in the house) will offer you to have tea, but (do not accept and) "!rush back immediately

I went to the

same address--which was that of my own servant--the landlord assumed that I was accompanied by an agent from the C.I.D. I went right into the room and took the money from exactly where the Shaykh had described to me. When I was leaving, the .landlord offered me tea, but I shouted at him and left the house

The money was a sum of one hundred tomans in all. I took half of that money to the Shaykh and placed it with much gratitude before him, imploring him to accept it as my gift. He did not accept it. After my insistence and to my greatest pleasure, he agreed :to pick twenty tomans, but not for himself; rather, he gave it back to me and said

I introduce to you some poor family whose daughters are in need of dowries; you"

should not leave it to anybody else but yourself do it. Go ahead and buy whatever ".they require and deliver them to their houses

!He did not take even a penny for himself

The Scent of Red Apples

One of the Shaykh's friends gave the following account: 'Together with the Shaykh we went to Kashan. The Shaykh had the habit that wherever he traveled, he would visit :the cemetery of that place. As we entered the cemetery in Kashan, he said

Assalamu ' Alayk ya 'Aba 'Abd Allah (a)" ("Salutations be on you O Imam Husayn (a)")" :We walked a few steps further on, and then he said

"?Do you not smell anything"

No, what'

:smell?' We asked. Then he asked

"?The smell (scent) of red apples"

Our answer was 'no' again. We went further on and met the man in charge of the cemetery

:The Shaykh asked him

"?Has anyone been buried here today"

The man answered: ' Just before you arrived someone was buried', and then he took us to a newly covered tomb. There it was! We all smelled the scent of red apples. We :asked the Shaykh about the scent, to which he answered

When this person was buried here, His Holiness Hadrat Sayyid al- Shuhada Imam" Husayn (a) came here and for the sake of this person (and by the blessed visit of

Sayyid al-Shuhada (a)) the punishment was removed from those buried in this ".cemetery

The Reward for Abstaining from Unlawful Look

Another disciple said: 'I was driving a taxi down the (newly named) Sipah Square, when I saw a tall, good-looking lady in a chador who was standing along the street waiting for a taxi. I pulled up and let her get in, while keeping my look away from her .and asking God for forgiveness, and drove her to her destination

The next day when I had an audience with the Shaykh, he said- as if he had witnessed :the event in person

Who was that tall lady you looked at and turned away your look from and asked God" for forgiveness? The Almighty and Exalted God has reserved a palace in the Paradise "........for you as well as a houri similar to that

The Fire within the Unlawful Property

In

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a session, someone was practicing witchcraft and the Shaykh's son was also present. He stated: 'I tried to hamper him, so whatever he did ended in failure. At last, he found out that I was interfering in his business and implored me not to "cut off his daily bread". Then, he gave me a precious rug as a gift. I took the rug home. As soon as my :father saw it he said

Who has given this rug to you? (I see) fire and smoke is rising out of it! Take it back to" "!its owner right away

'.And I did so

How the Gramophone Stopped Working

One of the Shaykh's sons said: 'My father and I went to a wedding ceremony of one of

our relatives. When the host noticed the Shaykh's arrival, he asked the young men around to turn off the gramophone. As we entered, the young men came over to see who is coming that because of him they should not listen to music. When the Shaykh was shown to them, they said: 'Come on! Shall we turn off the gramophone for him?!' .And went back and turned it on again

I had eaten half of my ice cream when my father patted on my arm beckoning to leave. Not knowing what the matter was, I said:' I have not finished eating my ice "!cream yet. He said: "That's all right, let's go

I heard (later on) that as soon as we left, the gramophone broke down. They had to bring in

another one, and that one burned up too. This event made the host to that ceremony .turn into a devotee of the Shaykh

The Appeal by the Youth in Love

One of the Shaykh's friends said: 'I went on a trip to Mashhad with the Shaykh. In the Holy Shrine of Imam al-Reza (a), we saw a young man beside the steel window in Sahn-i Inqilab crying and lamenting bitterly and swearing the Holy Imam (a) to his .mother

:The reverend Shaykh said to me

".Go and tell him it got heard, and tell him to leave"

I went ahead and told it to the young man; he thanked and left. I asked the Shaykh .what it was all about

:He explained

This young man is in love with a girl and wants to get married to her, but they (her" patents) do not agree; he has come here to entreat Imam al-Reza (a) to help him. His

".Holiness (a) said: It got answered, he may go

"!Do not get Furious"

One of the Shaykh's students said: 'One day I was discussing in the market with a person about the religious matters. He would not accept any of the evidence I brought up. I got a little angry. An hour later, I went to visit the Shaykh. As soon as he :saw me, he said

"?Did you have a row with someone"

:I told him what happened. He said

In such situations do not get angry, follow the way of the Holy Ahl al-Bayt (a); if you" see they do not

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.accept, discontinue the argument

"!His Beard is of no Concern to You"

One of the Shaykh's disciples is quoted as saying: 'One evening I arrived in the session and I was a little late, as the Shaykh was already reciting the munajat (whispering prayer). When I looked at the audience, I saw someone with a shaved beard. I got upset in my heart and felt sorry why this person had shaved. The reverend Shaykh who was standing behind me and facing the qibla, stopped his praying all of a sudden :and said

His beard is of no concern to you! See what his deeds are like; he may have some" ".good in him which you are lacking

Responding Satan's Temptation

The Shaykh's son related: 'Once I was going somewhere with my father, I saw two women with made up faces and without hijab were each walking on either side of my father. Each one of them was holding a top in her hand and spinning it. They said to

'?my father: 'Hey fellow! Look! Which of our tops is spinning prettier

I was too little to say anything, and my father was ignoring them while he was holding his head down and smiling. They came along with us a few steps and suddenly disappeared! I asked my father who they were. He answered: "They were both ".Satan

Part ۳: Self-Building

The Ways of Self-Building

point

The reverend Shaykh was highly capable of influencing talented souls with his charismatic power in training and self-building them. One of the Shaykh's disciples said: 'Once I was accompanying the

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Shaykh and the late Ayatollah Muhammad Shahabadi (ra)(۱) in Tajrish square. The Shaykh was very fond of Ayatollah Shahabadi; someone came to us and asked the .latter

?(Do you say the truth or this man (pointing to the Shaykh"

?The late Shahabadi (ra) replied: "What truth are you talking about

"?What do you mean

"?The man said again: "Which one of you say the right thing

Ayatollah Shahabadi said: "I teach and they (the students) learn; he (meaning the ".Shaykh) constructs and builds human beings

Although this suggested how extremely humble and self-negating this divine man and ascetic was, it represented the efficacy of the Shaykh's speech and his enriching and .training power as well

Dr. Hamid Farzam describes the Shaykh's charisma and verbal influence as follows: 'Professor Jalaluddin Huma'i, a leading Professor of literature at Tehran University, was a renowned expert in ma'arif (Divine knowledge), Persian literature, and Islamic Mysticism, and was my own professor. He had audience with the reverend Shaykh at the age of sixty.

When I was at the age of seventeen, studying with the Prof. Huma'i, he had already edited Abu Rihan al-Biruni's Al-Tafhimu li Awa'il Sana'at al-Tanjim and 'Izzuddin Mahmud Kashani's Misbba al-Hidaya wa Miftahu'l Kifaya. He had also authored very scholarly such volumes as Ghazali Namah, a collection on Imam Muhammad Ghazali's life and works. His comprehensive introduction on Misbba al-Hidaya is by itself a perfect course of theoretical and practical mysticism.

Anyway, this mystic was my teacher in his early sixties. One day,

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۱ - Imam Khomeini's (ra) teacher in science of irfan. Imam Khomeini (ra) always mentioned his name with high respect mentioning him as 'perfect arif'.

as usual, when I went to have an audience with the.Shaykh, he said:

"Your professor Mr. Jalaluddin Huma'i came to me. I said some sentences to him; he was so deeply touched that he struck his forehead (as a sign of deep regret an repentance) and said: Strange!! I have fared the wrong path for sixty years!!"

It was actually the impact of the revernd Shaykh's words and personality that so deeply moved Professor Huma'i with such high scholarly and mystical status. May God bless their souls.

In some sessions of supplication and prayer, when the Shaykh began to talk in his absorption, he would say:

Friends! Such words that I tell you are of the final class (advanced level) of" ".mysticism

.And it was indeed so

Another disciple of the Shaykh said: 'The Shaykh's lessons would transform copper into gold. Thus, the prime point in expounding the Shaykh's self -building power is the secret of his efficacy on the audience and his style of teaching and training as well as the method of (moral and spiritual) construction this divine man applied to his .disciples

Self–Building by One's Manners

From the viewpoint of Islamic traditions, the major condition for the efficacy of teaching and training by instructors of ethics is their obligation to act according to :their own teachings and guidelines. In this respect Amir al-Mu'minin Ali (a) said

"من نصَبَ نفسه للناس اماما فعليه أن يبدأ بتعليم نفسه قبل تعليم غيره، وليكن تأديبه بسيرته، قبل تأديبه بلسانه"

Whoever undertakes leading people should, before teaching"

others, attempt to teach himself (sufficiently) and before training others for good (manners by speech should do the same by his own good manners."(١

The most outstanding feature of the Shaykh's efficacy of discourse and his enriching power was his application of the above instruction of Amir al-Mu'minin Ali (a) and calling people to God by means of his good manner prior to his (use of) speech and .preaching

(أرباب متفرقون) If the Shaykh called people to monotheism, he had already shattered Many lords differing among themselves) (Yusuf: ٣٩) and on top of all his idol of nafs) (carnal desire). If he called people to sincerity in all deeds, his deeds and gestures were all sincerely for God. If he ever fell negligent, God's Grace would come to his aid, :in such a manner that he once said

Every needle that I drive in the cloth for the sake of other than God, it would stick into" ".my finger

And if he called others to love of God, he himself was burning fervently in the fire of love of God. If he called people to benevolence and self-sacrifice to others and serving them, he was himself a pioneer in this way. When he referred to the "world" as "the hag" and bewared others of liking it, his own ascetic life was clear evidence of his unwillingness to such "hag". And finally, if he called others to struggle against whims of nafs for the sake of God, he was himself on

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.Mizan al-Hikmah, I, ۲۲۲: ۸۵۰ -۱

.the forefront of this struggle and was triumphant like Yusuf (a) from a hard trial

Educational Methods

The method used by the reverend Shaykh in self-building and training his disciples can be divided into two parts: ۱) his educational method in public sessions and ۲) His .educational method in his private encounters

Public Sessions .۱

The Shaykh's public sessions were usually held in his house once a week. Similarly, in most occasions such as Islamic festive days, birth and martyrdom anniversaries of the Infallible Imams (a), he would hold sessions in his own house. In the months of Muharram and Safar(۱) and the holy month of Ramadhan, he would also hold preaching sessions. These sessions that were occasionally held in his friend's houses .on a regular basis would last for two years

Weekly sessions were usually held after performing evening and night prayers on Thursday nights with the Shaykh as prayer leader. After prayers, he would recite some couplets of the late Fayz(۲) containing istighfir (asking Allah's forgiveness with :an attractive and impressive voice

,I seek Allah's forgiveness for whatever (I have done for) other than the Beloved'

.I seek Allah's forgiveness for my fictitious existence

,If a moment elapses without remembering his (beautiful) countenance

.I seek Allah's forgiveness myriad of times for that moment

,The tongue that is not engaged in remembering the Friend

Beware of its evil and seek Allah's forgiveness. Life came to its end and due to negligence

I was not conscious for a single hour, I seek Allah's forgiveness (for

p: ٨٠

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۱ - He advised his son: "Make sure to attend the mourning gatherings (rawda) always on the last day, snce Hadrat Fatima Zahra (a) is present there.

۲ - The late Muammad Mohsin Fayz renowned as Mulla Muhsin Fayz Kashani (۱۵۹۵-۱۶۸۰ CE. / ۱۰۰۶-۱۰۹۱ A.H.) ranked among the leading scholars, philosophers, mystics, exegetists, and poets of the ۱۱th century A.H.

.(that negligence

,The youth gone by and the old age drawn near to its end

'.I did nothing (worthwhile), I seek Allah's forgiveness

One of the Shaykh's disciples says: 'He would sing these poems in a way that we could not help crying. In the end he would read in an indescribably charming spiritual state '.(one of the fifteen whispered prayers(۱) attributed to Imam Zayn al-'Abidin (a

Another disciple said: 'In his supplication sessions I did not see anybody else shedding .tears like him; his weeping was really heart- rending

At the end of the supplication and serving tea, the reverend Shaykh would begin to

talk and preach. He was very eloquent; in his lectures he would try to impart to others what he had found through the Qur'an and the Islamic traditions as well as the facts .about which he had himself attained certitude

The keyword he frequently used when addressing those present in his session was rufaqa (friends); and the main topics of his lectures included: monotheism, sincerity, love of God, consistent presence of heart, proximity to God, rendering service to people, pleading with the Ahl al-Bayt (a), awaiting faraj, warning against love of dunya (worldly-mindedness), egotism, and whims of carnal soul (nafs). In the next chapters .the above topics will be discussed in details

Dr. Thubati said about the beginning of his acquaintance with the reverend Shaykh and what his sessions were like: 'In the last years of high school, I was introduced to the reverend

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Munajat khamsa asharah includes ۱۵ tersely state whispered prayers attributed to -۱ Imam Zayn al-Abidin (a). See The Psalms of Islam, translated by William Chittick, .London, ۱۹۸۸

Shaykh by the late Dr. Abdul 'Ali Goya-holding Ph.D. in Nuclear Physics from France - and attended his sessions around ten years. His sessions were brief and private, attended by very few people. Whenever the sessions got too crowded and some strangers attended, he would temporarily call the sessions off. That means he was .not after (attracting many) followers

Except for a few words, some advice, and preaching, which ended in a dua (supplication), nothing else would be brought up in his sessions. Although the talks were rather repeated, the sessions were so spiritually attractive that whatever repeated talks we heard they would not make us tired or bored at all(۱) Like the Qur'anic verses that whatever much you recite they are still fresh and pleasant, his .talks too were similarly always fresh and pleasant

The sessions were so spiritual (and otherworldly) that nobody tended to bring up the material and worldly issues, and if by any chance someone would talk of the material things, the people around would ignore them with contempt or even disgust. The reverend Shaykh's talks mainly concerned "proximity to God", "love of God", and "journey toward God". He would epitomize "proximity to God" in the following brief :words

You should change your ussa (i.e., ustad or master); that is, you have been doing for" yourself whatever you did so far. From now on, whatever you do, do it for God and (know that) this is the nearest way to God. 'Step on your own self, embrace

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The suffering by love is no more than a single story, and it is so amazing that from - ١ (whomever you hear it, it sounds untold. (Hafiz

(the Beloved.'(١

All human selfishness is due to one's self-love; you will not attain anything (make no :spiritual achievements) unless you turn to be a lover of God

If you get rid of your self, you will join the Beloved; Otherwise, keep burning' .'eternally, your state of affairs being unripe

You should do things out of love for Him; that is, love Him and do things for the sake of His love. Loving Him and doing things for Him is the secret of all spiritual advances that mankind can make, and this will be possible. Thus, all human advancements are attainable by opposing carnal desires; you will not attain it unless you wrestle with ".your nafs (carnal desire) and knock it down

:He said about egotism

Here, a fatigued body and a broken heart is worth buying, the self-selling market is" ".far away from this market place

:And he also said

Your price is as high as you demand; if you demand God, your price is infinite and if" you demand the world (material possessions); your price is as low as what you have .desired

Do not ever say I wish this I wish that, (rather) see what God wishes. When you give a feast see if you invite whomever you desire or whomever that Allah wants you to invite. As long as you are following the footsteps of your carnal wishes, you will reach nowhere. The heart is God's Abode; do not let anybody else in; only God

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Step on your own self, embrace the Beloved One (instead), up to His ka'bah of - ۱ union with Him, you are just one step away

must be residing and presiding in your heart. Imam Ali (a) was asked how he attained such high station. 'I sat (watchful) at the gate of my heart and let no one except God ".in. He replied

After his short talks, light refreshments would be served and then munajat (whispered prayer) would start. His munajat was really pleasant to hear and his spiritual state was very fascinating. He would not recite supplications plainly and formally; rather they were performed as whispering love songs to a sweetheart. While reciting munajat, he would so deeply get absorbed in the Beloved that it sounded as if a mother was seeking her lost child, weeping whole-heartedly .lamenting and talking to the Beloved Friend in His Holy Presence

Sometimes it seemed that amid the supplication, he would have received mystical intuitions, so that the signs and effects would then be revealed in his talks and manners. He deeply regretted that his "friends" did not make the advance that he had expected of them. He wished his friends opened up their eyes soon enough to see the .(angels and the Holy Imams (a

When someone returned from a Ziyarat (of the Holy Imams' (a) shrines), he would ask :him

"?Did you see that blessed Entity"

Of course some were successful in this respect, too, and had found good spiritual .states and even had some spiritual intuition. Others, however, were dragging behind

Anyway, his munajat was highly enchanting so that it would enliven the others too. He

knew the meanings of the supplications and stressed on some phrases in the supplication, repeating or explaining them sometimes. He would recite the supplication of Yastashir and Munajat-i Khamsa 'Ashar very often. He believed that .the supplication of Yastashir(۱) was expressing love to the Beloved

During the month of Muharram, he would talk very little; he would, instead recite some poems from the book Taqdis on the afflictions of the Ahl al-Bayt (a), and would .weep and then recite the munajat

Emphasis on Obeying God and Refraining from Carnal Desires

The reverend Shaykh believed that the wisdom behind creating man is his Divine vicegerency, representing God (on earth)(۲) Once man attains this station, he can carry out Divine acts. The way to reach this place is through obeying God and :opposing the carnal desires. In this respect, he said

:It is quoted in a Divine (Qudsi) hadith"

"يا ابن آدم! خلقت الأشياء لأجلِك وخلقتك لآجلی "

'O son of Adam! I created everything for you and created you for Myself.'(۳)

"عبدی أطعنی حتی أجعلك مِثلی أو مَثَلی "

'My servant! Obey me, so that I make you like Myself or an example of Myself.'(۴)

Dear friends! According to these ahadith, you are vicegerents of Allah; you are like pears, king of the fruits! Appreciate your value, do not follow whims of your carnal soul, and obey God so that you can achieve a place that enables you to perform divine things. God has created the entire universe for you, and has created you for Himself. See how high a station He has granted

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.See "Recite the supplication of Yastashir", Chapter Six, Part ۳ -۱

It is narrated that the Shaykh said: "I asked a number of scholars and people of -۲ spirituality why God has created man. I did not get convincing answers until I asked the same from Ayatollah Muhammad Ali Shahabadi (ra). He said: God has created "(man as His vicegerent: (I will create a vicegerent on earth.) (al-Baqarah: ۳۰

Sharh-i Asma-i Husna, I, ۱۳۹: ۲۰۲; Rasa 'il-i Karaki, III, ۹۶۲ -۳

Bihar al-Anwar, CV, ۱۶۵; "Maqam-i Imam Ali (a), III; ۱۸۵, with a slight difference -۴

"!to you

The Shaykh believed that one would be ranked among the human beings unless he :attains the status of Divine vicegerency. He would say

As spoons are for eating food and cups are for drinking tea, so also men are for" "turning into humans

He would repeatedly say: "God has graced me with karamat; you too perform Godly work, He will grant you the same. O person whose profession is brick laying! O person whose work is tailoring! When you lay the brick or stitch with the needle, do it with love of God and be conscious of God! When you are wearing clothes .that cost one hundred tomans(۱) a meter, do not say I have bought this one hundred tomans a meter; say, in stead, God has bestowed this on me. Represent God! Do not represent "!yourself

Recognition of Internal States

The Shaykh would recognize inner states of the audience through his intuitive faculty.

However, he would never point out the weak points of any person in public, unless of course in a way that the person himself would understand the admonition and would endeavor to rectify himself. Two examples of such a case are briefly stated as follows:

Putting the Shaykh to Test

One of the eminent and upright preachers said: 'One afternoon in ۱۹۵۶, I was in the Madrasa of Haj Shaykh Abdul Husayn in theTehran's Bazaar-next to Masjid of Shaykh Abdul Husayn. The late Shaykh Abdul Karim Hamid-an eminent disciple of the late Shaykh Rajab Ali-came to me and talked about his ustad (master),

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۱- One hundred tomans per meter cloth was very costly at the time of the Shaykh.

Shaykh Rajab Ali Khayyat, and his status of sincerity and spirituality and finally asked me 'to accompany to the Shaykh's Thursday evening session with him. I accompanied him to the Shaykh's session. When we arrived in, I saw the Shaykh was sitting facing the qibla and engaged in reciting the munajat of Arnir al-Mu'minin Ali (a):

"اللهم انی أسالک الأمان یوم لا ینفع مال ولا بنون .."

"O Lord! I seek Your security on the Day that neither property nor children are of any benefit."

At the same time some of his devotees were sitting behind him, chanting the munajat along with him. I, too sat behind the crowd in the last row, saying to myself: O God! If he is one of Your awliya, may You make my preaching sessions thrive so that I can get a good material benefit!

As soon as this idea crossed my mind, the Shaykh said in the middle of his supplication:

"I say forget about money, but he has come here to test me with money!"

He said this in Persian and then went on reciting the munajat (in Arabic):

"وأسالك الأمان يوم لا ينفع مال و..."

"......I seek Your security on the Day that neither property"

The Presence of an Informer

Gradually, high-ranking government officials and famous personalities were also attending the Shaykh's sessions. According to the reverend Shaykh, they would come (to attend his sessions) for solving their own problems and looked for the "hag world" in the Shaykh's house. Nevertheless, there were some among them who benefited

from the Shaykh's, sermons as much as their capacity. Due to the presence of such individuals, the Intelligence Service of the Shah's regime become suspicious toward the sessions held by the Shaykh, and commissioned a major called Hasan al-Baygi to attend - incognito the Shaykh's sessions together with another agent in order to .report the reason for the presence of the government officials in those sessions

When the Intelligence Service agent entered the session, the Shaykh said while :preaching and giving advice to the audience

Focus your attention to God and do not let no one but God in your heart, as heart is" (like a) mirror and if it gets the slightest stain, it will show itself up very quickly. Now, some look like informers and come in with a nickname; for instance his name is Hasan .but he feigns to be such and such

These words impressed and amazed the Intelligence Service agent, Major Hasan al-Baygi, whose real name was not known to anybody, so deeply that he was said to .(have resigned from SAVAK (the then Intelligence Service in Iran

"!First Please your Father"

Sometimes the reverend Shaykh did not admit some people in his sessions or he would impose a condition on them. One of the Shaykh's disciples who had been with :him for about twenty years describes how his relation with the Shaykh first began

At first, whatever I tried to attend his sessions, he would not allow me; Until one day" I saw him in Masjid-i Jamah, and

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:after greeting asked him why he does not let me in his sessions. He said

"!First, please your father, then I will talk to you"

That night I went home and fell at my father's feet, imploring him to forgive me. Having gotten very surprised, my father asked: What has happened? I said: Do not ask anything, just forgive me, I know I did not know what I was doing. ...And finally my .father forgave me

:The next morning I went to the Shaykh's house. As soon as he saw me, he said

".Well done! Now come and sit next to me"

Since then, right after the Second World War, I remained in his company until his '.death

Special Guidelines .۲

One of the most outstanding features of a perfect ustad (master) and instructor on the path toward God Almighty is that his guidelines are given according to the needs of a spiritual seeker in his different stages of truth-seeking. This undertaking is, of .course, not possible in public and in the presence of others

A physician, however expert and experiencd cannot treat all the patients visiting him by a single prescription and a single drug. Each patient needs a specific medication. It is even probable that for some reasons two different types of medicine are prescribed for two patiets suffering from a same illness. This is also true for the .illnesses of the soul

An ethics instructor is indeed a physician of man's soul. He can cure the ethical maladies only

if he identifies first and foremost the origin of the illness, and has the suitable .medicine at his disposal as well

Great Messengers of God (a) who are the main instructors and trainers of the souls were generally possessed of this characteristic. They not only realized the general requirements of the human society in various ways, but they were perfectly aware of .personal needs of each members of their community

Imam Ali (a) comments on this feature of the Holy Prophet (s) as follows: "He was a physician who, with his knowledge, wandered about seeking his patients, while his medicines and medical instruments were prepared by all means. They were used on demand and healed the souls which were suffering (ailments such as) blindness, deafness, and dumbness. With his medicine, he looked for the houses of negligence (and stations of bewilderment."(١

Scholars of Divinity, who are true successors to the prophets and to their vicegerents, enjoy such characteristic too. They are the ones who according to Amir al-Mu'minin Ali :((a

"هجم بهم العلم على حقيقه البصيره، وباشروا روح اليقين"

Knowledge based on true insight have reached them and they have attained the" (spirit of certitude!"(٢

:Of course, as stated inthe holy Imam's (a) words

"أولئک والله الأقَلّون عدداً، والأعظمون عند الله قدْراً"

The number of those scholars of Divinity, who enjoy the highest status with their God" (Almighty, are very few in number..."(٣

The Importance of a Perfect Instructor

The late Ayatollah Mirza Ali Qazi (ra) is quoted as saying: 'The most important

requirement in this

.Nahjul-Balagha, sermon: ۱۰۸, with some comment by the author -۱
.Nahjul-Balagha, Maxim: ۱۴۷ -۲
.Ibid -۳

path is having a knowledgeable, selfless perfected master. When a person is a seeker on the path to Allah, if they spend half of their lives looking for a master (ustad), it is '.worth it. The one who has found a master, they have traversed half the way

Careful study of the Shaykh's special guidelines to his disciples reveals that he had through self-negation, sincerity, and assistance from the unseen attained such a high status of spiritual perfection that he was able to diagnose the spiritual maladies and problematic situations arising in the lives of others, and to cure and resolve them with the proper prescription. This reality is clearly evident to those who are familiar with .the Shaykh's life

Sins and Calamities in Life

From the Islamic viewpoint, man's improper deeds play a basic role in the :predicaments and misfortunes that befall him. The Holy Qur'an asserts accordingly

(وما أصابكم من مصيبه فبما كسبت أيديكم)

Whatever misfortune happens to you, is because of the things your hands have) (wrought,..) (al-Shura: ۳۰

Interpreting and explaining the above verse, Imam Ali (a) said: "Beware of sins, as all calamities and shortcomings in livelihood, even the scratch on the body or falling down to the ground are due to committing sins because God Almighty says: (Whatever misfortune happens to you, is because of the things your hands have (wrought.) (al-Shura: ۳۰)."(۱)

If a person really believes that his improper deeds will not only cause agonies in his life after death but also entangles his worldly life in

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.Khisal, ۶۱۶:۱۰; Bihar al-Anwar, LXX, ۳۵۰: ۴۷ -۱

various predicaments, then he would avoid committing vileness and does not even think of them. The more this belief is strengthened, the more the ground for fostering .pious human beings will be prepared

With his Divine intuition and spiritual vision, the reverend Shaykh would literally notice the relation of vileness to the plights and predicaments of human life, and by stating them he would resolve peoples' problems and difficulties. Employing this method of .self-building, he would direct them toward human perfection

"!We Sell on Credit even to you"

One of the Shaykh's children said: 'One day the late famous Murshid Chilow'(۱), went to the Shaykh complained of his (catering) business being sluggish, saying: 'Dadash (olloquial way of addressing a friend)! What is this situation we are stuck in?! For a long time we had prosperous position, we sold ۳-۴ large pots of chelow (cooked rice) to plenty of customers. But all of a sudden the table turned and the customers abandoned one after another, the sale turned sluggish and we now hardly sell a large pot each day. The Shaykh pondered for while and then said: ' It is your own fault; you "!reject the customers

Murshid said: 'I did not reject anyone; I even serve the children and give them half a '.kebab

:The Shaykh responded

Who was that Sayyid who ate (in your restaurant) for three days on credit and the" "?last time you pushed him out of your shop

Having gotten very embarrassed, Murshid left the Shaykh and hastened to look for

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۱ - The father of Heydar 'Ali Tehrani, the poet nicknamed "Mu'jiza". (His story related to the Shaykh are given in, "Humility"; and "Your Father should not Turn into an Idol for you" Chapter five, Part I, and Chapter Two, Part ۳, respectively.)

that Sayyid. When he found him, he apologized him and then put up a sign on the window of his restaurant that read:

"We sell on credit, even to you; cash will also be lent as much as we can afford!!"

Annoying the Child

One of the noble disciples of the reverend Shaykh said: 'My two year old child, who is now forty years old, had wetted his bed and his mother had beaten him so hard that he fell almost dead. An hour later, my wife came down with a high fever so that we rushed her to a doctor, spending sixty tomans for the medication, but the fever did not subside, and even worsened: We visited the doctor again, spending another forty tomans that was exorbitant for us those days.

Anyway, in the evening of the same day I picked up the Shaykh to accompany him to the session. My wife was also present in the car. When the Shaykh got in the car, I introduced my wife to the Shaykh and said: "This is my children's mother, she's got a fever; I took her to the doctor but her fever has not come down yet. The Shaykh looked at us and said to my wife:

"A child is not to be beaten like that; ask Allah's forgiveness for that, go appease him and buy something for him; she will recover from the illness."

We did so, and her fever subsided!

Annoying the Wife

The same person relates: One day the Shaykh and I

were in Agha Radmanish's house. I said to him (the Shaykh): 'My father(۱) died around the year ۱۳۵۲ A.H. ۱۱۹۳۳ CE. I would like to see how he is doing now (in the purgatory world). The Shaykh said:

"Recite (the Surah) al-Fatiha!"

Then he deliberated and paused for a while, and said:

"They do not let him come, he is encumbered due to his wife!"

I said: 'Please talk to his wife if possible.' He said: "Your stepmother is coming."

'She was a villager who was my father's wife, and since my father got married to several other women, so she was not on talking terms with my father to the end of her life. Whenever my father entered through a door, she would leave the room from another door.

I said to the Shaykh: 'Ask her what I should do to make her pleased with my father'. The Shaykh replied: "He (i.e., me) should feed the hungry." 'How many?' I asked. He said one hundred people. I said: 'I could not afford so many; and he finally lowered the number down to forty people. Upon accepting, the Shaykh said: "Your father's voice is heard now. As that woman became pleased, your father was liberated. He says tell my son why he has married two women. See what affliction I am encumbered in! Now take care to treat [your wives] justly." Another friend of the Shaykh said: 'I asked him of my father's condition in barzakh (purgatory world). The

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۱- Akhund Mulla Muhammad Baqir, son of Akhund Mirza Jani Qazvini, was among the pious and combatant scholars of Qazvin, born in ۱۲۹۰ AH./ ۱۸۷۳ CE, and a student of Grand Ayatollah Akhund Khurasani (the author of al-Kifaya), Haj Shaykh Mulla Fatullah Khurasani, and Haj Muammad Hadi Tehrani in Najaf-i Ashraf. Also see: Ganjinay-i Danishmandan, IX, ۲۱۹.

Shaykh answered: "He is encumbered by your mother!" I found he was right; My father had married another woman and my mother was upset in this regard. So I went to my mother and made her pleased. The next time that I visited the Shaykh, he :said as soon as I arrived in

"!How nice it is to reconcile two people; your father is at ease now"

Annoying the Husband

One of the Shaykh's disciples related: 'There was a woman whose husband was a Sayyid and a friend of the reverend Shaykh. She would irritate her husband a lot. After :some time, she died. At her funeral the Shaykh was present. Later on he said

This woman's spirit was disputing while she was being buried, saying well! Now I am" dead, so what happened?! When she was being placed in the grave her deeds materialized into a black fiel dog. As the woman noticed the dog was (as torture in her grave) being buried with her, she found out what misery she had piled up for herself in the course of her life. She began to lament and implore and yell! I saw she was too distraught, so I asked this Sayyid to forgive her; he forgave her for my sake. The dog "!went away and she was buried

The Displeased Sister

One of the Shaykh's sons narrated: 'There was an architect whose job was constructing houses for selling. He had constructed one hundred units, but due to excessive indebtedness he was in a terrible financial

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situation and was about to be arrested and jailed. He came to my father and said he could not go home, and that he had to hide himself from the public. After a short deliberation, the Shaykh said: "Go and please your sister!" The architect said: 'My sister is pleased.' The Shaykh said she was not. The architect pondered for a while and then said: 'Yes, when my father died, he bequeathed us some money. My sister's share amounted to fifteen hundred tomans that I remember I did not give her. Then

he went away and returned some time later and said: 'I gave my sister five thousand .tomans and secured her consent

:My father kept silent for a moment and after a short deliberation said

"?She says she is not satisfied. Does she have a house"

:The architect said: 'No, she is a tenant.' The Shaykh said

Go and transfer the ownership of one of your best houses to her, and then return to" ".me to see what can be done for you

The architect said: 'Reverend Shaykh! There are two of us sharing the buildings, how :can I do that?' The Shaykh said

".I am at my wit's end; this servant of God is not yet satisfied"

At last, he went away again, finally transferred one of the houses to the ownership of her sister, and helped her move her household furniture to that house. When he "!returned the Shaykh told him: "Now it is solved

The next day he managed to

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.sell three of the houses and relieved from the predicament

Unkindness toward the Sister

One of the merchants of (Tehran) Bazaar went bankrupt. While he was complaining and telling his grief to his friend, the Shaykh passed by his shop. Upon seeing him, his friend advised him to tell his problem to the Shaykh. The merchant said: 'I do not know him.' He finally agreed to consult the Shaykh, at his friend's insistence. He went to the Shaykh and after greeting, narrated his problem to him. When he ended his :explanation, the Shaykh said with lowered head

You are a cruel person; it has been four months since your brother-in-law has died"

and you have not called on your sister and his (orphaned) children. This is the source ".of your problem

:The merchant said: 'We have a dispute.' The Shaykh said

".Your problem is rooted there, but you do not know it yourself"

The merchant went back to his friend and told him what the Shaykh revealed to him. Then he bought some household articles, took them to his sister, reconciled with her, .and his problem was resolved

The Displeased Mother

Several people, including a young man, were sentenced to death. His relatives went to the Shaykh and asked him imploringly for a solution. The Shaykh told them that he was encumbered by his mother. They went to his mother and she said whatever she prayed it was to no effect. They told her: 'The reverend Shaykh says you are :displeased with him (her son). She answered

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That is right; my son had newly married when some day after eating lunch I cleaned' the table cloth, put the tableware on a tray, and held it to my daughter-in-law to take it to the kitchen. My son took the tray from me and said to me: 'I have not brought you !a handmaid

Finally his mother was pleased with him and prayed for his son. The next day, it was .announced that there has been a mistake and the young man was released

The Broken-Hearted Aunt

One of the Shaykh's friends related: 'My father was suffering a serious illness that whatever they did for his cure was to no effect. I told the Shaykh that my father had been sick and bed-ridden for a year. The Shaykh asked me if I had an aunt. The :answer was, yes. The Shaykh said

".Your father is encumbered by your aunt, and if she prays he would recover"

I requested my aunt to pray for my father; she prayed but my father did not get well.' I went to the Shaykh again and said my father did not get well despite my aunt being pleased. The Shaykh gave me some instruction for doing favor to my aunt's four .orphaned children and told me to ask them to pray

I did as the Shaykh had instructed and then asked my aunt what the reason for her discontent with my father was. She said: 'After my husband died, your father took me and my four children to

his own house to live with them. Until one day that I was quarrelling with your mother when your father arrived and dislodged my children and me from his house. My heart .was broken at that moment

At last, with aunt being pleased, my father got better but did not regain perfect health. Once again I went to visit the Shaykh and told him the story. This time he instructed me to do favors to a Sayyid that he introduced, and after I did so my father got .perfectly well

Annoying the Employer's Son

".One of the Shaykh's disciples quoted him as saying: "You are never unduly afflicted

Once I broke my head in an accident. Along with some friends I went to see the Shaykh. My friend asked the Shaykh: 'See what he had done to have broken his head!' :The reverend Shaykh deliberated for a while and then said

".He has annoyed a child in the factory"

I found he was right. I was an operator of a bending device, which was a rare profession in those days. Such professionals were typically dear to their employers. Once my employer's son found a fault with me and it was irrelevant to him; so I had a .row with him to the extent that he burst into tears

:The Shaykh said

If you do not satisfy him, your problem will continue." I went (to that child) and" .apologized

Annoying the Employee

Several officials from the finance department went to see the Shaykh in one of his

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disciples' house. One of them said, my body is itching and it does not get cured. The :Shaykh said after a little deliberation

".You have annoyed a Sayyid woman"

That person said: 'These (ladies) have come (to the office) to sit at their desks but they do not perform their duty; and as you say something to them, they burst into tears!' It turned out that a Sayyid woman had been employed in their office and he had :annoyed her with his remarks. The Shaykh said

".You are not going to recover from the itching unless you ask her forgiveness"

Another of the Shaykh's disciples told a similar story as follows: We were sitting in the presence of the Shaykh in the courtyard of one of his friends' house. There was also present in the meeting a high ranking official who regularly attended the Shaykh's sessions. Having stretched his legs due to some ailment, he said to the Shaykh: Your reverence! I am suffering this pain in my legs for the last three years. Whatever I do, I get no results and the medication is not effective. As it was his usual custom, the Sheikh asked the people present to recite the Sura al-Fatiha, then deliberated for a :while, and said

The pain in your legs started since the day you reprimanded the typist lady because" of her mistakes in typing and shouted at her. She was a Sayyid woman whose heart broke and cried. Now you should find her and

".beg her for pardon so that the pain disappears

The man said: 'You are right, she was the typist in our office and I shouted at her, '.making her cry

Usurping the Old Woman's Right

One of the Shaykh's disciples, who had lost his spiritual state after having eaten :certain food, asked the Shaykh for help. The Shaykh suggested

The kebab that you ate was paid by such and such a merchant who had usurped the" ".old woman's right

(Offending others (with foul language

One of the Shaykh's disciples narrated: One day the Shaykh and I along with some others were passing through Imam Zadeh Yahya (s). Street when a bicycle rider hit a !passer-by. The latter offended the rider by calling him an ass

:The Shaykh, hearing this, said

"!His interior turned into an ass right away"

Another of his disciples quoted him as saying: "Once I was passing through the bazaar when I saw a cart moving by, with a man holding the bridle of the horse that was pulling the cart. All of a sudden a passer-by jumped before the horse to cross the bazaar. The carter shouted at him: 'You hackney!' I saw that the carter also turned .into a horse, and the bridle split into two

Cruelty to Animals

According to the Islamic laws, cruelty to animals is a reprehensible deed. A Muslim is (not allowed to annoy or even imprecate animals.(١

-- :Thus, the Holy Prophet (s) is quoted as saying

"لو غُفر لكم ما تأتون الى البهائم لغُفرَ لكم كثيراً"

If the cruelty you do to animals is"

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.Mizan al-Hikmah, III, ۱۳۴۳ -۱

)forgiven, many of your sins are forgiven!"(۱

Although the slaughter of halal meat animals is allowed as lawful in Islam, the slaughter itself involves rules that cause the animal suffer as less pain as possible. One rule is that the animal must not be slaughtered before the eyes of other animals)of the same species.(۲

:As Imam Ali (a) has stated

"لاتذبح الشاه عند الشاه ولا الجزور عند الجزور وهو ينظر اليه"

Do not slaughter a sheep in the presence of another sheep and a camel in the")presence of another camel while they are looking at the animals' being slaughtered.(۳

So, beheading an animal's offspring before its mother's eyes is strongly reprimanded, as it represents utmost cruelty and ferocity, leaving detrimental impacts on the ,perpetrator

One of the Shaykh's disciples related: 'A slaughterer came to the Shaykh and said: "My '?child is dying; what shall I do

:The Shaykh said

".You have slaughtered a calf before its mother's eyes"

:The slaughterer implored the Shaykh to do something for him. The Shaykh said

)It says: no way, he has slaughtered my baby, so his baby must die!"(۴"

point

Salvation" is in fact an epitome of all the human virtues and perfection and the way" to attain it, from the Qur' anic viewpoint is through self-building and purification of the :soul. Following numerous swearing, the Exalted Allah asserts

(قد أفلح من زكّاها)

(Truly he succeeds (attains salvation) that purifies it,) (al-Shams: ٩)

All that the Divine Messengers have

p: ١٠٢

١- .Ibid. III, ١٣۴۴: ۴۵٢٠

٢- .Wasa'il al-Shi 'a, XXIV, ١۶; Tahrir al-Wasila, P. ١۵١, issue no. ٢٠

٣- .Al-Kafi, VI, ٢٢٩: ٧; Tahdhib al-Ahkam, IX, ٨٠: ٣۴١

۴- Ayatollah Fahri quotes Agha Sayyid Muammad Reza Kashfi as saying: 'There was a butcher living in our neighborhood whose son came down with a severe stomachache. He appealed to Agha Kashfi, who in turn referred him to the reverend Shaykh. He told him: "You have slaughtered a calf before its mother's eyes, so this son ".of yours will not be cured

brought from the Almighty God for guiding man, are preliminary steps to "Salvation" and actualization of human potentials. The significant issue in purification of the soul for mankind is to find out how to begin self-building and what its basis is from the viewpoints of Divine Messengers. The basis of self-building and the first step in purification of soul is "monotheism". Thereupon, the first message of all Divine :"messengers was, "La ilaha illa Allah-there is no god-but Allah

(وما أرسلنا من قبلك من رسول الا نوحى اليه انه لآ اله الا انا فاعبدون)

Not a messenger did we send before you without this inspiration sent by Us to him:) (that there is no god but I; therefore worship and serve Me.) (al-Anbiya: ٢۵

:The first sayings of the Holy Prophet (s) addressed to the people was

"يا ايها الناس! قولوا: لا إله الله، تفلحوا"

(O people! Say 'There is no god but Allah', so that you attain Salvation."(1)

Nevertheless, mere utterance of "La ilaha illa Allah" is not sufficient by itself, as what forms the basis of self -building and leads to Salvation and actualization of human .perfection, is the truth of monotheism and turning into a true monotheist

The sign indicating that man has attained true monotheism-in the perfect and real sense of the word-is that he can like Divine angels and through Divine Essence :witness the oneness of the Exalted God Almighty

(شهد الله أنه لآ اله الا هو والملئكه واولوا العلم)

There is no god but He: that is the)

p: ١٠٣

.Bihar al-Anwar, II XX, ٢٠٢ -١

(witness of Allah, His angels, and those endowed with knowledge...) (Ale 'Imran: ١٨

One of the Shaykh's disciples said about him: 'May God bless his soul! All his endeavors were toward attaining la illaha illa Allah, and all his words were dedicated to reach the ' .reality of this pure phrase

Another of his disciples said: 'The Shaykh was an expert in this discipline. He did his best to transmit to others what he had attained himself and to enhance his disciples to .the rank of intuitive monotheism

The Shaykh said: "Monotheism is the basis of self-building. Anyone who wants to construct a building, they must first lay the foundation firm enough, otherwise that building will not be well grounded. The spiritual seeker must begin his journey from monotheism, as the first utterance of all the prophets has been la ilaha illa Allah. Man

will fail attaining human perfection, unless he appreciates the truth of monotheism and believe that there is nothing in existence except God's Pure Essence. Having ".grasped the reality of monotheism, man will whole-heartedly attend the Creator

He also said: "If you wish that God call(۱) you, (try to) gain a little divine knowledge and ".(enter into a) deal with Him

When we say la ilaha illa Allah, we should tell the truth (be honest). Until a man does" not leave aside the false deities, he cannot be a monotheist and be truthful in uttering la ilaha illa Allah. Ilah (god = false deity) is something that

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۱- We read in Munajat-i Sha'baniyya: "الهی واجعلنی ممن نادیته فأجابک ولاحظته فصَعِک لجلالک فناجیته سراً وعمل لک جهرا" "O Lord! Make me one of those people whom You call and they answer You; You look at them, they fall unconscious at Your Majesty; and You talk to ".them secretly and they act openly

captivates human heart, and whatever that captivates his heart is his god(۱) When we ".say, la ilaha illa Allah we should be astounded by Him

The entire Qur'an refers to the statement, la ilaha illa Allah. Man must reach to the" point that there remains nothing engraved in his heart except this statement, and whatever other than Him depart from his heart: (Say: ' Allah (sent it down)": then leave (them.) (al-An'am: ۱۹

Man is the tree of monotheism, the fruit of which is the emergence of Divine" attributes; it (the tree) will not be perfect until it yields such fruit. Man's peak of perfection is reaching (nearness to) Allah, that is, to become a manifestation of God's attributes. Try to bring to life Divine attributes in you. He is Gracious; you be gracious too. He is Merciful; you be merciful too. He is Concealer (of defects); you be concealer ".too

What is beneficial to man is the Divine attributes, nothing else is as influential on"

"!man, even the Greatest Name of God

If you are engrossed in monotheism, you will enjoy the Exalted God's special" bounties at any moment that you had not enjoyed prior to that moment. God's ".bounties and blessings are novel at any moment

Cleansing of Polytheism

Cleansing polytheism off your soul and heart is the first step toward attaining the truth of monotheism. Hence, in its main motto, i.e., la illaha illa Allah, denying false .gods is considered prior to proving the One Real God

Now, it must

Then you see such a one as his god is his own vain (أفرأيت من اتخذ الهه هواه وأظله الله على علم) -۱ .(desire? Allah has, knowing (him as such), left him astray...) (al-Jathiyah: ۲۳

be noted what polytheism is. Who is a polytheist? Is polytheism merely believing in deity of objects? Are polytheists the only people who have faith in inanimate idols? Or .something else is the case

Polytheism vs. monotheism is the belief in illusory forces and their efficacy in the .world of being and their worship against the Real Efficient, i. e., the One Sustainer

The monotheist does not view anything effective in the world except the One God and does not worship anything, neither the inanimate idols nor the animate ones, except .Him

The polytheists are the ones that view as effective other than God and obey other than Him; sometimes they worship objects, sometimes they obey the powerful, sometimes they are slaves to their own carnal desires and whims, and sometimes (they are in the service of all three.(۱

From the Islamic viewpoint, all three types of polytheism are blameworthy, and to

attain the reality of monotheism there is no other way than wiping ofolytheism in the .strict sense of the word

The remarkable point here is that the most dangerous type of polytheim is the third type, i. e., following the whims of carnal soul (vain desires). This type of polytheism is the source of obstacles to intellectual and emotional cognition, and the beginning of :polytheism in the first and the second sense

(أفاريت من اتخذ إله هواه وأضله الله على علم وختم على سمعه وقلبه وجعل على بصره غشاوه فمن يهديه من بعد الله أفلا تذّكرون)

Then seest)

p: ۱۰۶

۱- The first group is referred to in the noble verse: وقالوا لاتذرن الهتكم ولاتذرن وداً ولا سُواعاً ولا يغوث ويعوق ونسرا)And they have said (to each other), abandon not your gods: abandon neither Wadd nor Suwa, neither Yaghuth nor Ya'uq, nor Nasr.) (Nuh: ۲۳). The second group is referred to in: أن اعبدوا الله واجتنبوا الطاغوت (.Serve Allah, eschew Evil) (al-Nahl: ۳۶). And the third group is referred to in: أفرأيت من اتخذ الهه هواه (Seest thou such a one as taken for his god his own passion (or impulse)?) (al-Furqan: ۴۳).

thou such a one as takes as his god his own vain desire? Allah has, knowing (him as such), left him astray, and sealed his hearing and his heart (and understanding), and put a cover on his sight. Who, then, will guide him after Allah (has withdrawn (guidance)? Will ye not then receive admonition?) (al-Jathiyah: ۲۳

Accordingly, the reverend Shaykh viewed the idol of nafs as extremely detrimental to :monotheism and would say

"All troubles are regarding that grand idol that lies within yourself."(۱)

:Imam Khomeini (ra), the great ascetic and man of vision has also said

The mother of all idols is the idol of your own nafs (carnal desires); unless this grand"

idol and powerful Satan is not shattered, there will be no way to Him-the High and the Most Exalted. Lo and behold! This idol can hardly be shattered and this Satan can (barely be tamed!"(٢

.If man triumphs over such a grand idol, he has achieved the highest victories

!(Wrestle with your Nafs (Vain Desires

One of the famous wrestlers of the time of Shaykh called "Aghar Agha Pahlavan" narrated: 'Once I was taken to the reverend Shaykh, he patted on my upper arm and :said

"!If you are a real champion, wrestle with your own nafs"

In fact, shattering the idol of nafs in the first and the last step in obliterating .polytheism and achieving the reality of monotheism

,(Step on your own self, embrace the Beloved One (instead'

Up to his Ka'bah of union with him, you

.See: "A penny in Response to Ya Allah!". Chapter Six. Part ٣ -١

.Sahifah-i Nur. XXII, ٣٤٨ -٢

.are just one step away

If you get rid of your self, you will join the Beloved; Otherwise, keep burning eternally, '.your state of affairs being unripe

And maybe this is what is meant by nearness of the way to reach God, which Abu :Hamza Thumali has quoted Sayyid al-Sajidin (Ali ibn al-Husayn) (a) as saying

"وأن الراحل اليک قريبُ المسافه"

(For the one who is faring the path toward You, the distance is short."(١"

:And as Hafiz of Shiraz has put it

As long as you see erudition and knowledge, you are deprived of Divine knowledge; I' '.tell you only one point: do not mind yourself, and you will be free

Apparently, the reverend Shaykh was appointed to go on a mission to Kennanshah to :tell the above point to such a great personality as Sardar Kabuli

Traveling for the Purpose of Telling a Point

Ayatollah Fahri quoted the late Ghulam Qudsi as saying: 'In one year the reverend Shaykh came to Kennanshah. He said to me one day to go to Sardar Kabuli's house with him and we did so. I introduced the Shaykh to the late Sardar Kabuli. A while passed by in silence and then the latter said: "Reverend Shaykh! Say something to "!benefit us

:The Shaykh responded

What should I say to the one whose trust in his own learning and acquired" ".knowledge is more than his trust in God's Grace

The late Sardar Kabuli was sitting silently. Some moments later; he took off his turban, put it down on the ground, and began hitting his head

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.Mafatih al-Jinan, the supplication of Abu Hamza Thumali -١

on the wall so harshly that I felt pity for him and proceeded to stop him but the Shaykh :did not let me and said

".I have come here only to say this to him and return..."

"!Ask Allah's Forgiveness a Thousand Times"

One of the Shaykh's sons related: 'A person from India called "Haj Muammad" used to come to stay in Iran for one month every year. Once on his way to Mashhad he got off

the train to say his prayer in a corner. When the train was about to depart, his friend called at him to get on or he would be left behind. Haj Muammad did not pay any heed to his friend's calling, and with his psychic power stranded the train for half an hour. When he returned from Mashhad and visited the Shaykh, the latter told him: "Ask "!forgiveness from God a thousand times

What for?" He asked. "You did something wrong!" Replied the Shaykh. He asked" '.again: 'What wrong? I made a pilgrimage to Imam al-Reza (a) and prayed for you too

The Shaykh said: "You stranded the train there, wishing to demonstrate it was you "!who...! You see, the Satan deceived you. You were not entitled to do that

Personality Cult and Polytheism

The border between monotheism and polytheism is so narrow, subtle, and :unnoticeable that no eyes can see it. The Holy Prophet (s) said in a hadith

"وإن الشرک أخفی من دبیب النمل علی صفاه سوداء فی لیله ظلماء"

Verily, polytheism is more imperceptible than an ant moving on a black"

p: ۱۰۹

(stone at a dark night."(۱

Only upright and insightful human beings can see the borderlines of hidden .polytheism and warn against them

Personality cult is one type of various hidden and subtle kinds of polytheism in which many people are entangled. If attention and obedience to personality, however divine and great, is not for the sake of God, it is regarded as polytheism. Thus the reverend :Shaykh would say

"!If you come to me for my sake, you have much to lose"

"!Your Father should not turn into an Idol for you"

Hujjat al-Islam Sayyid Muhammad Ali Milani, the son of the eminent jurist and marja' the late Ayatollah Sayyid Muhammad Hadi Milani (ra) gave an account of the meeting :between the reverend Shaykh and his noble father as follows

The late Rajab Ali Khayyat, whom God had bestowed on with insight due to his self-' restraint and abandonment of sins, managed to train a group of devoted people in .sincerity and love of God

He was interested in my father. I personally visited him frequently because of our old friendship and sometimes even enjoyed his sessions, in which he would generally preach for the spiritual seekers with reciting of Qur'anic verses and the narrations of .(the Ahl al-Bayt (a

One year he found the honor to pay a visit to Mashhd for pilgrimage of the holy Imam al-Reza (a) and settled in a hotel nearby the Holy Shrine. My late father invited him for lunch. The Shaykh came to our house and my father was very pleased to meet him and

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.Mizan al-Hikmah, VI, ۲۷۲۴: ۹۳۱۶ -۱

they talked to each other until evening. In the same meeting the late Shaykh faced :me and said

"!Be careful your father should not turn into an idol for you"

:And said to my father

"!Watch out your son does not get you in trouble"

It crossed my mind whether one could have both this world and the Hereafter. The :reverend Shaykh turned to me and said unprecedentedly

:Recite this supplication a lot"

"ربنا آتنا فی الدنیا حسنه وفی الآخره حسنه"

".(O God! Grant me benefit in this world and benefit in the Hereafter)

I accompanied him back to his hotel, where Heydar Agha Mu'jiza (author of a poetry collection) came to the reverend Shaykh and invited him to lunch for the following day. The Shaykh did not accept his invitation first, but finally accepted at his insistence. Then, Heydar Agha went to my late father and invited him, too. At last, along with my late father we went to his house and found that the reverend Shaykh Rajab Ali and two of his co-travelers were already there. That day our session lasted until early .evening

How to Reach the Reality of Monotheism

Now the basic question is this: 'How can one cleanse themselves of polytheism, and by shattering the idol of nafs, uproot the covert and overt polytheism in themselves ?and achieve the lucidity of pure monotheism

:The reverend Shaykh replied the question as follows

To my humble opinion if one seeks a way to be delivered and wishes to attain real" perfection and to enjoy the

p: ۱۱۱

meanings of monotheism, they should resort to four things: first, perpetual presence; second, to rely on to the Ahl al-Bayt (a); third, begging at night (i. e., whispering ".prayers and supererogation during night time); and fourth, benevolence to people

Elucidation of the above cases from the viewpoint of the Shaykh will be given in the .coming chapters

The Elixir of Self-Building

point

Love is the elixir of self-building and enrichment. Love of God Almighty cures all moral

vileness entirely and presents all good attributes as a whole to the lover. The elixir of love makes the lover so enamored of the beloved that every other association with .anything and anyone else except God is broken off

In the Whispered Prayer of lovers, which is attributed to Imam Zayn al-'Abidin (a), we :read

"الهی من ذا الذی ذاق حلاوه محبتک فرام منک بدلا ومن الذی الذی انس بقربک فابتغی عنک حولا"

My God, who can have tasted the sweetness of Thy love, then wanted another in" place of thee? Who can have become intimate with Thy nearness, then sought (removal from thee?"(۱

,Love is charming and when it is settled in the soul'

'.It closes the door of heart to everything other than the beloved

:And in a hadith attributed to Imam al-Sadiq (a), we read

"حب الله إذا أضاء على سر عبد أخلاه عن كل شاغل، وكل ذكر سوى الله ظلمه، والمحب أخلص الناس سراً لله تعالى، وأصدقهم قولاً، وأوفاهم عهداً"

,When the radiance of love of God shines on the heart of a devoted person"

Bihar al-Anwar, XC۱۱۱, ۱۶۰; Mafatih al-Jinan; The Psalms of Islam (al-Sahifah al- - ۱ .Sajjadiyya),IX, ۷۷: ۲۴۸

it delivers him from any other preoccupation; anything but remembrance of God is darkness. The lover of God is the most sincere of God's servants, the most truthful in ".speech, and the most faithful to vows and commitments

In the first stage of detachment, the carnal soul (i. e., the soul that bids to evil) dies and the human rational life begins; and in its highest stage the eye of heart enlightens by the light of meeting with Allah and man attains the highest degree of monotheism,

:which is the status of ulu 'l 'ilm. We read in Munajat-i Sha'baniyya

"الهی هب لی کمال الانقطاع الیک وأنر أبصار قلوبنا بضیاء نظرها الیک"

My lord! Grace me with the highest stage of detachment (from all things) toward" Yourself, and enlighten the eyes of our hearts with the light of its looking (directed (toward) You."(۱)

The Real Elixir

An interesting account related by the Shaykh about love of God as an elixir as well as :the real elixir is quoted as follows

Once I was looking for the science of alchemy; I practiced self-discipline for a time" .until I reached a dead end and gained nothing

,Then, in a spiritual state I was graced with the verse

(من کان یرید العزه فلله العزه جمیعا)

If any do seek for glory and power-to Allah belong all glory and power) (Fatir: ۱۰). I) said I wanted the science of alchemy. I was told (by inspiration): 'They want alchemy for glory and power; the reality of glory and power

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.Bihar al-Anwar, XCV, ۹۹ -۱

".is in this verse (the aforesaid verse). This set my mind at ease

Several days later, two men (following ascetic practice's) came to my house and asked to meet with me. When we met they said: 'It has been two years since we have been trying to acquire the science of alchemy but to no effect. We appealed to Hazrat .Imam al-Reza (a), he referred us to you

The Shaykh smiled and told them the above story and then added: "I was permanently delivered (from such an aspiration); the reality of alchemy is attaining

".(proximity with) God Himself

Sometimes the Shaykh would recite the following statement from the supplication of :'Arafah to his friends in respect to the above verdict

"ماذا وجد من فقدک ومالذی فقد من وجدک."

The one who has not found (known) You, what has he found? And the one who has" "?found you; what has he not found

Imam al-Sajjad (a) has made an interesting reference to the elixir of love of God at .(the ending part of the supplication of Makarim al-Akhlaq (Noble Moral Traits

"وانهج لی الی محبتک سبیلا سهله أکمل لی بها خیر الدنیا والآخره"

Open a smooth road for me to Thy love, and complete for me thereby the good of..." (this world and the next."(1

:Hafiz has beautifully touched upon this point in his following couplets

,O ignorant one! Make an attempt to become insightful'

.(You will not be a leader, unless you are a seeker on the path (yourself first

In the school

p: ۱۱۴

.The Psalms of Islam (al-Sahifah al-Sajjadiyya), p. ۷۵ -۱

.of truth and with instructor of love, try, O son, to become a father some day

,Give up the copper of your existence like the men on the (spiritual) path

So that you discover the elixir of love and turn into gold. If the light of love shines on ,your heart and soul

’.By God you will get brighter than the sun in the heaven

The Shaykh's Greatest Art

The Shaykh's greatest feature and art was his achievement of "the elixir of love". He was an expert in practicing this alchemy and was no doubt one of the clearest Whom He will love as they will love) (يحبهم ويحبونه والـذين امنوا أشـد حباً لله) :manifestations of Him) (al-Ma'idah: ۵۴); and

But those of faith are overflowing in their love for Allah) (al-Baqarah: ۱۶۵), and) .whoever approached him would somehow enjoy the elixir of love

:The reverend Shaykh said

Love of God is the last stage of servitude. Love is beyond infatuation; infatuation is" accidental, whereas love is essential; the infatuated one may turn away from their beloved, but the real lover is not like this; if the infatuated ones' beloved get handicapped or lose their virtues, their infatuation may disappear, but a mother loves ".even her handicapped child

:He used to say

The standard for evalution of deeds is the standard by which the doer loves God" ".Almighty

,The one who has not sown the seed of love'

.Will not harvest even a single grain of perfection

Shirin and Farhad

Sometimes the Shaykh would cite the story of Shirin and

p: ۱۱۵

:Farhad as similitude to what he wanted to impart to his disciples

.With any strike of his pickaxe, Farhad was remembering Shirin"

Whatever you do, you should be in such a state to the end of your task; all your ".thinking and remembering must be of God, not of yourself

"!Write for the Love of the Beloved"

One of the Shaykh's disciples related: 'I was the secretary to a trading company. One :day he (the Shaykh) came to me and told me

:Who are you writing in these notebooks for?" I said, for my master. He asked"

If you write your name in these notebooks, will your master make any objection to" "?it

:I answered, certainly he will. Then he asked

The cloth you are measuring, for whom you are measuring it? Yourself or your" "?master

I said, for him (my master). Then he asked: "Did you understand". I said, no. Then he :went on to say

With every pickaxe that Farhad struck, he would say along: 'My sweetheart Shirin!'" and he did not mention anything but Shirin's name. So, you write this notebook with the love of the Beloved! Measure the cloth with his remembrance! Consequently all these will be a preliminary step toward union (with the Beloved); even your breaths "!must be breathed in His memory

"!God Has no Clients"

:In order to find clients for God (!) the Shaykh would say

Imam Husayn (a) has got so many customers (clients); perhaps this is the case for" other Imams, too; but God has few clients! I feel pity for

p: ۱۱۶

God with so few clients; very few come over to say: I want God; I would like to make

".acquaintance with Him

:Sometimes, he would say

While you are in need of God, He is in love with you!" We read in a Hadith-i Qudsi" :((Divine tradition

"یا ابن آدم! إنی أحبک فأنت أیضا أحببنی"

(O son of Adam! I love you, So, you love Me you, too."(۱"

"عبدی! أنا وحقی لکَ محبٌّ، فبحقی علیکَ کن لی محباً"

My servant! I swear by My right that I love you, so, do love Me by my right over" (you!"(۲

:Sometimes he would say

Yusuf is good-looking, but think of the One who has created Jusuf; all beauty belongs" ".to Him

,In the world, no one saw beauty such as that of Yusuf'

(The (absolute) beauty (however) belongs to the One who created Yusuf.(۳

"!Teach Lessons of Love"

One of the Shaykh's disciples related; 'The late Shaykh Ahmad Sa'idi, an eminent mujtahid Jurist) and the teacher of the late Agha Burhan(۴) in Kharij (doctoral) lessons, :asked me once

Do you know any tailor in Tehran to make a cloak for me? And I introduced the .reverend Shaykh to him

After a time, I saw him who said to me as soon as he saw me: 'What did you do with me?! Where did you send me?!' I asked: 'How come? What has happened?' He said: 'I went to the gentleman that you introduced to me to make a cloak for me. When he

was measuring

.Mawa'izal-'Adadi'ah, ۴۱۹ -۱

.Irshad al-Qulub, ۱۷۱ -۲

According to Dr. Farzam, this poem is by Mulla Biman' Ali Raji Kermani, the famous -۳ poet of the Qajar period. He is said to have extemporized the second line of this .couplet when Fath Ali Shah Qajar said the first line and told him to tell the second

A great scholar in Tehran and the founder of Madrasa Ilmiyya (Islamic seminary) of -۴ .Burhan next to the holy shrine of Hazrat Abdul Azim al-Hasani in Shahr-i Ray

for my size he asked me about my job. I said I was a talaba (an Islamic Seminary :student). He asked

"?Do you study or teach lessons"

I answered I was teaching. He asked what I was teaching. I said I was teaching Kharij :lessons (advanced levels of Islamic studies). He nodded in agreement and said

"!It's fine, but teach lessons of love"

!This statement of his transformed me to a totally new person; it changed my life

After this event, the late Sa'idi kept his contact with the Shaykh and enjoyed his .audience, praying for me for having introduced the Shaykh to him

(Learn Love from a Moth!"(۱"

:One of the Shaykh's disciples quoted the Shaykh as saying

One night I was engaged in whispered prayer and supplicating and imploring to the" Beloved. I noticed, in the meantime, a moth approached the lantern and began flying around it over and over until one side of its body struck the lantern and fell down but did not die. With much effort it moved about and flew to the lantern again and struck the other side of its body to the lantern, giving up its life this time. This event inspired

something to me: O such and such! Learn (how to) love from this insect; let no pretension or act of claiming remain in you. The truth of love and affection was what this insect fulfilled. I learned a lot from this strange scene, and my (spiritual) state .totally transformed

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Moth is a symbol of love (of fire) in Persian literature, which sacrifices its life in the -۱ .way of its beloved

"..

Fundamentals of Love of God

The fundamental principle in love of God Almighty is "Knowing Him".(۱) It is most :unlikely that one knows God and does not fall in love with Him

If you see him (Yusuf) and do tell apart between the orange (you are peeling) and' ,your hand

'.(It will be admissible to reproach Zulaikha (in her fervent love of Yusuf

:Imam al-Hasan al-Mujtaba (a) said

"من عَرف الله أحبه"

(Every one who knows God will love Him.'(۲"

The basic question raised here is that what knowledge leads to love of God? ?Demonstrative knowledge, or intuitive cognition

The reverend Shaykh said: "The main point here is that unless man attains intuitive knowledge toward God, he will not fall in love (with Him). If he gains the knowledge, he sees all goodness is gathered in God

(ءالله خير أمّا يشركون)

Who) is better? Allah or the false gods they associate (with Him)?) (al-Naml: ٥٩)); in))
".this case it is unlikely that he pays attention to other than God

The Holy Qur'an names two groups whose knowledge toward the Exalted and Almighty God is of the intuitive type: One is "the angels", and the other is "those :"endowed with knowledge

(شهد الله أنه لآ إله إلا هو والملئكه وأولو العلم)

There is no god but He: that is the witness of Allah, His angels and those endowed) (with knowledge.) (Ale 'Imran: ١٨

Imam Ali (a) is quoted as saying about the sweetness of His knowledge and the .satiating cup of His love enjoyed by the first group, i

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For further study on fundamentals of love of God see Muhammadi Ray Shahri's Al- -١ .Mahabbafi al-Kitab wa al-Sunna, researched and published by Dar al-Hadith, Qum
.Tanbih al-Khawatir, I, ٥٢ -٢

:e., the angels

"ثم خلق سبحانه لإسكان سماواته وعماره الصفيح الأعلى من ملكوته خلقا بديعا من ملائكته .. قد استفرغنهم اشغال عبادته ووصلت حقائق الايمان بينهم وبين معرفته وقطعهم الايقان به الى الوله اليه، ولم تجاوز رغباتهم ما عنده الى ما عند غيره، قد ذاقوا حلاوه معرفته، وشربوا بالكأس الرويه من محبته"

Then Allah, the Glorified, created for inhabiting His skies and populating the higher" strata of His realm new variety of creatures namely the angels. ...Occupation in His worship has released them from other responsibilities and realities of faith have served as link between them and His knowledge. Their belief in Him has made them concentrate on Him. They do not long for anything other than what is with Him. They have tasted the sweetness of His knowledge and have drunk from the satiating cup of (His love."(١

Attaining Intuitive Knowledge

To attain intuitive knowledge, there is no way other than cleansing the stains of unseemly deeds off the heart's mirror. Imam al-Sajjad (a) has said in a supplication :quoted by Abu Hamza Thumali

"وأن الراحل اليک قريب المسافه وأنک لا تحتجب عن خلقک الا ان تحجبهم الأعمال دونک"

The seeker after You has a near distance to You. And verily, You are not veiled from " (Your creatures unless (unseemly) deeds veil You from them!(۲

God is not veiled; our own actions veil Him from us. If the veil of unpleasant actions is removed off the heart, it will witness the elegant beauty of the exalted Almighty God .and will fall in love with Him

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.Nahjul-Balagha, Sermon ۹۱ -۱
.Mafatih al-Jinan, Dua-i Abu Hamza Thumali -۲

,The Beauty of the Beloved is unveiled and uncovered'

’.Settle down the dust over your path so that you can see His Beauty

In order to Settle down the dust over the path and cleanse the heart off the indecent actions, the heart must be detached from love of the world, since love of the world is .the source of all vanities and vileness

The Pitfall of Love toward God

The real pitfall of love of God is the love of the world. According to teachings of the reverend Shaykh, if one wants the world for God's sake, it is a preliminary step toward union with Him; and if it is for the sake of other than God, it will be a pitfall of His love. In this relation, there is no difference between the lawful (Halal) and the unlawful (haram) worldly attachments.. Obviously, the unlawfuI worldly gains and pleasures .make man farther distant from God

:The Holy Prophet (s) has been quoted as saying

"حب الدنيا وحب الله لايجتمعان فی قلبٍ أبداً"

(The love of the world and love of God never meet in a single heart."(1

:Imam Ali (a) also said in this respect

"کما ان الشمس واللیل لایجتمعان، کذلک حب الله وحب الدنیا لایجتمعان"

As the sun and the (darkness of the) night do not meet, neither do the love of God" (and the love of the world (ever) meet."(2

:He said in another hadith

"کیف یدعی حب الله من سکن قلبه حب الدنیا؟!"

How may a person claim (boast of) love of God, whereas love of the world"

.Mizan al-Hikmah, II, ۹۶۰: ۳۱۶۲ -۱

.Ibid., II, ۹۶۰: ۳۱۶۴ -۲

(has nestled in his heart?"(1

The reverend Shaykh would always compare the world to "the hag" in his examples "!and sometimes would face a disciple and say: "I see you are encumbered by this hag

:And then he would recite this poem of Hafiz

,There is none who is not entangled in that curling ringlet"

"?Who is there in the way of who lies not such a snare of tribulation

:Actualy, the Shaykh had adopted this comparison from the following hadith

"ان عیسی بن مریم – علیه السلام- کوشف بالدنیا فرآها فی صوره عجوز هتماء، علیها من کل زینه فقال لها: کم تزوجت؟

قـالت: لاـ أحصـيهم. قال: وكلهم ماتوا او كلهم طلّقوك؟ قالت: بل كلهم قتلت. فقال عيسـى –ع- بؤسا لازواجک الباقين، کيف لايعتبرون بازواجک الماضين؟ کيف تهلکينهم واحدا واحدا ولا يکونوا منک على حذر؟"

The reality of the world was revealed to Jesus (a). He saw it as an old woman (hag)" that had lost all her teeth and had all (types of) ornaments on her. He asked her: 'How many husbands have you got?' She said: 'I have not counted!' His holiness asked: 'Have all your husbands died or have they divorced you?' She replied: 'No, rather I have killed them!' Jesus (a) said: 'Woe to your future husbands who have not taken a lesson from your past husbands; how you killed them one by one and they did not (distance themselves from you! '(٢)

The Shaykh would repeatedly say: "Those who are coming to me are just looking

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١- Ibid., ٩۶٠: ٣١۶٣

٢- Tanbih al-Khawatir: I, ١۴۶. See also, Mizan al-Hikmah, IV, ١٧۴۴: ۶٠١٠.

for the hag(١) nobody comes here to say, "I am not on good terms with God; reconcile me with Him!"

The Inward Aspects of the Worldly-Minded People

The reverend Shaykh who saw people's innermost aspects with his insight, would say about the inward images of those who are people of the world, people of the hereafter, and people of God:

The ones who want the world by unlawful means, their inner aspects are like dogs," those who want the Hereafter are neutral, and those who want God are manly."

The God-Displaying Heart

The reverend Shaykh would say: "The heart indicates whatever it wants. Make an effort that your heart may indicate God! Whatever people like its picture will be reflected in their heart so that those who are endowed with Divine knowledge can

realize what state they will have in barzakh by means of viewing their hearts. If they are infatuated with outward beauty of someone, or highly interested in money or property, they will adopt in barzakh the same forms as the things they loved in the ".world

"?What have you Done"

One of the Shaykh's disciples said: 'One night I had an exciting and erotic dream which preoccupied me during the day too. The next morning I went to visit the Shaykh. Once :he saw me, he recited the following poems

,If you have in mind not to dissociate with the Friend'

.Hold on to the string (of love) so that he holds on to it too

,O heart earn livelihood in a way that If your feet slip

The angel will keep you

.Meaning they are asking for solving their mundane problems -۱

'.safe) with the two hands of supplication)

I found out he had sensed something; he would not recite these lines without a purpose. I kept sitting for a time. The Shaykh was busy with his tailoring. I said: Is :there something (you want to say)?! He said

"!?What have you done that your face has turned like that of a woman"

I said I saw a beautiful woman in a dream and the memory has been retained in me. :Then he said

"!That's it! Ask for God's forgiveness"

"!?What Do I see in you"

One of the Shaykh's devotees said: 'Once I left home for visiting the Shaykh. On my way to his house I happened to see an unveiled lady (with no Islamic modest dress) who attracted my attention. I got in the Shaykh's house and sat next to him. He took a glance at me and said:

"Such and such! What do I see in you?!"

I said to myself: 'Ya Sattar al-'uyab (O Concealer of defects)!' The Shaykh smiled and said:

"What did you do that what I was seeing disappeared?!"

Men who had turned into Women!

Dr. Hajj Hasan Tawakkuli related: 'One day I left my (dentist's) clinic to go somewhere. I took a bus and when it stopped near Firdawsi Square, some people got on the bus and then I saw the driver was a woman and when I looked further I saw all (passengers) were women with the same appearance and clothing! I saw a woman was sitting next to me too! I pulled up myself, thinking that

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I had taken the wrong bus and that it was the women employees' bus service. That bus stopped and a woman got off. After that the woman got off, all (people riding the bus) turned into men!

Although at first I hadn't intended to visit the Shaykh, when I got off the bus I went to the Shaykh. Before I said anything, the Shaykh said:

"You saw all men turned into women! As those men's attention were attracted by that woman, all turned into women!"

Then he went on to say:

"When dying, whatever a person is paying attention to would materialize before their eyes. The love of Amir al-Mu'minin Ali (a), however, leads to Salvation."

How good it is to be absorbed in the Beauty of God…so that you see what others do" ".not see and hear what others do not hear

"?What's that Table"

Dr. Thubati said: There was a cobbler called Sayyid Ja'far, who is dead now. He related: 'Once I had a big table in my house that I did not have a suitable place to put it and I was wondering what to do with it. When in the evening I went to the session, as :soon as the Shaykh saw me he said in a low voice

What is that table you have placed there-pointing to my heart?!" The cobbler" suddenly noticed what the Shaykh meant; he smiled and said: 'Reverend Shaykh! I did '!!not have any place to put it, so I left it here

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Attaining Divine Mysteries

The reverend Shaykh believed that the most fundamental step in attaining Divine .mysteries is to be God-Oriented

:He would say

Until an iota of love for other than God exists in the heart, it is impossible to achieve" "!any of the Divine mysteries

Do not Desire Anything Save God!" The Shaykh had learned from two angels the idea" that 'he should desire nothing save God." One of his disciples quoted the Shaykh as :saying

One night two angels taught me in two statements the path to annihilation (in Divine" Unity). And the two statements were: Do not say anything of yourself, and do not (want anything save God!"(۱

:Similarly, he stated

Be conscious, creation has been for your sake. Whatever you want beside God is (a"

".sign of) your failure

The Status of the Intellect and that of the Soul

:The reverend Shaykh said

If man is in the stage of intellect, he will never evade devotional acts, does not" "العقل ما عبـد به الرحمن" :commit sins – in disobedience to God, and according to the hadith the intellect is that by means of which the Merciful God is worshipped) "واكتسب به الجنـان and by means of which the Paradise is attained)(٢) at this stage he seeks other than God – i.e., Paradise. But when he achieves the stage of ruh (spirit), according to the and (I) breathed into him My Spirit) (al-Hijr: ٢٩) he will only...)(ونفخت فيـه من روحى) 'verse :look to the Truth and becomes an evidence to the second couplet of the following

The fastings of the masses'

Khaja Nasir al-din Tusi said in this respect: "And man will attain monotheism only -١ after he loses his existence and non-existence and goes beyond these two ranks. As long as he is hesitating between existence and non-existence, he is either a man of this world or of the next. If he wants unreal existence and real non-existence he is a man of the world and the next world is forbidden to him. And if he wants real existence and unreal non-existence, he is man of the next world and this world is forbidden to him. But if he neither wants existence nor non-existence, i. e., if he neither wants his self nor his selflessness and is not aware of these two (states of being) and does not see them, (then) he is a man of God and both this world and the next are forbidden to him. That is to say, ifhe looks to the world or the Hereafter, he will lose that high status and turns quite the reverse. Since as long as a man is looking for the Hereafter, the paradise, and rewards and happiness he is indeed seeking his own perfection in itself and by itself; therefore he is seeking himself rather than God. And as such, he is a man of multiplicity rather than a man of Unity as stated in the following hemistich: Whatever you see beside God is an idol; shatter it! Thus, wanting anything except God is idolatry; the Hereafter, the Paradise, and God's pleasure and

proximity are beside God and it is unseemly for the seeker of Unity to care for any of such things or to view himself as among those seeking such things. As whoever (really) knows God bears the sign that he does not wish other than God; and this (process of) knowing God and wanting God is still (a sign) of multiplicity. For, in Unity there is no knowing and the known, no wanting and the wanted; all is God and nothing else. So, the one who sees God and nothing else is the seeker of Unity. If God Almighty unveils the existence and the non-existence, one will attain such a status. "See, Risala of 'Tawalla wa Tabarra' in the Appendix of Akhlaq-i Muhtashami", p .۵۶۹.

۲- Al-Kafi, I, ۱۱:۳.

.are from drinking and eating. The fastings of the elect are from all sins

.His fastings are from other than the Friend. Whatever he wants is all for His sake

:And as Hafiz stated

.If the Paradise is granted to me how may I accept it'

" '.As the union with the Friend is better than the Paradise in my view

Worship Based on Affection

At the peak of his God-Seeking, man worships God on the basis of affection rather than out of desire for the Paradise or fear of the Hell; the same way as Imam al-Sadiq (a) said about his own worship:

"ان النـاس يعبـدون الله عز وجـل على ثلاـثه أوجه: فطبقه يعبـدونه رغبه فى ثـوابه فتلـك عبـاده الحرصـاء وهـو الطمع، وآخرون يعبـدونه فرقـا من النـار فتلـك عبـاده العبيـد وهى الرهبه، ولكنى أعبـده حبا له عز وجل فتلك عباده الكرام وهو الأمن، لقوله عز وجـل: (وهم من فزع يومئـذ آمنون) ولقوله عز وجـل: (قل ان كنتم تحبون الله ..) فمن أحب الله أحبه الله عز وجل، ومن أحبه الله عز وجل كان من الآمنين".

In worship of the Almighty and Glorious God, people are in three groups: one group" worship Him for reward, which is the worship of the greedy and that is avarice; the other group worship Him out of fear of the Hell, which is the worship of the slaves and that is fearfulness; but I worship the Almighty and Glorious God out of love and

affection for Him which is the worship of the noble, and that is the source of safety ,and security

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for the Almighty and Glorious God says: (And they are secure of that Day's fear.) (al-Naml: ۸۹) And also for His Almighty and Glorious saying: (Say if you love Allah....) (Ale (Imran: ۳۱

Thus whoever loves Almighty and Glorious Allah, He would love him too and whoever is loved by Almighty and Glorious Allah, he will be secure (of the terror of the Judgment Day)."(۱) The reverend Shaykh would frequently enjoin his friends to strive to attain a point in God-Orientedness where nothing but love of God motivates their .acts of devotion

!Everything for Oneself, even God

:The reverend Shaykh would say

O Man! Why do you demand other than the God? What have you seen (received)" from other than Him?(۲) If He does not will, nothing will be effective; and your return !will be toward Him

.There is sugar (fruitful targets) in the town'

(But the wayfaring falcons are content by hunting flies!!'(۳

You have given up God in favor of other than Him! Why are you whirling around yourself!! Seek God and set every demand as preparatory to union with Him. The "!problem is that we want everything, even God, for ourselves

The Highest Levels of Piety

:The Shaykh said about the levels of piety

Piety has certain levels; the lowest level is performing the obligations and avoiding" the prohibited, which is fine and appropriate for some people; but there are highest

levels of piety which demand avoiding other than Allah, that is caring for nothing in the ".heart except for love of God

The School of Love

The reverend Shaykh believed

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.Mizan al-Hikmah, VII, ۳۴۱۸: ۱۱۶۴۷ -۱
It is quoted in a Qudsi (Divine) hadith: 'O Man! Everybody wants you for himself or -۲ herself and I want you for yourself, so do not flee from Me! -al-Mawa'iz al-Adadiyah, ".۴۲۰
.Hafiz -۳

that man will not attain the peak of humanness unless he diverts his heart from other than God; even if he strives to attain self-perfection, he will not reach that goal. Thus, if someone would come to the Shaykh asking for guidance as to the reason for his :failure in his ascetic efforts, he would comment

You have worked for results, whereas this is not a school of results, it is a school of" ".love, a school of God-Orientedness

Opening up the Heart's Eye

The late Shaykh had learned by experience that opening up the eye and ear of the heart and getting to know the mysteries of the Unseen would be possible by means of perfect sincerity and God-Orientedness in the absolute sense of the word. He would :say

If you watch out for your heart and do not admit other than God in it, you will be able" to see what other people are unable to see, and hear what other people are unable to ".hear

If man keeps the eye of his heart away from other than God, He will grace him with"

".radiance and will introduce him with fundamentals of divinity

".If one works for God, his heart's eye will open up"

Friends! Pray to God to deliver you from deafness and blindness; (for) as long as man" "!!seeks other than God, he is both deaf and blind

In other words the Shaykh believed that intuitive knowledge is not possible except through (gaining) a sound heart; a perfectly sound heart is

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one in which there is not the slightest love of worldly desires and does not want anything beside God. This is in line with the esteemed saying of Imam al-Sadiq (a) in .describing a sound heart

But only he (will prosper) that brings to)(الا ـ من أتى الله بقلب سليم) :Interpreting the verse :Allah a sound heart) (al-Shu'ara': ۸۹), the holy Imam (a) said

"هو القلب الذى سَلِمَ من الدنيا"

(That is a heart which is pure from (impurity) of the love of the profane desires."(۱"

:In another hadith, the holy Imam (a) said

"القلب السليم الذى يلقى ربه وليس فيه أحد سواه، وكل قلبٍ فيه شرک أو شک فهو ساقط "

A submissive and pure heart is one that meets the Lord while there is nothing in it" other than Him; and every heart in which there is polytheism or doubt it is defective ((and diseased)."(۲

The Inward Aspect of Heart

:The reverend Shaykh said

Once a person is endowed with the inner eye (heart's eye), as soon as he admits" other than God in his heart, his Purgatory inward state takes the same form (as what

enters his heart). If you demand other than God, your price (value) is as much as what you have demanded; and if you are God-Oriented, you are invaluable- whoever is with Allah, Allah will be with him. If you are absorbed in God at all moments, Divine ".radiance will shine on you and you will see what you wish with the Divine light

The Heart to which Everything is Present

:The reverend Shaykh said

Try to set your"

.Mizan al-Hikmah, X, ۴۹۸۴: ۱۶۹۳۱ -۱

.Ibid. X, ۴۶۸۴: ۱۶۹۳۰ -۲

heart for God; when your heart is for God, He will be there; when He is there all that relates to Him will be present and evident there; whenever you will all will be with you, for God is there, the spirits of the Prophets and Awliya will be there; if you will, even Makkah and Madinah will be with you So try that your heart be just for God so that "!whatever is created by God be present to you

The Man who Performs Godly Acts

The reverend Shaykh believed that if the love of God dominates the heart and it really does not wish for anything beside God, man will attain the God-vicegeral status and :Godly acts will be performed by him. In this relation he would say

If something dominates another thing, it will impart its quality to the latter; like when" iron is put in a fire, after a while the fire will permeate the iron enabling it to bum like a fire. The same will be true in respect to the relation between man and his Creator and "!Lord

It is also quoted from him: "We do not do anything extraordinary, rather, we find (develop) the nature that belongs to Godly man. Everything is granted to man by the

spirit. The spirit of a cow does the work of a cow and the spirit of a rooster does the work of a rooster. Now tell me! What should the Godly spirit of man do? It must do something Godly. The verse,

"ونفخت

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And (I) breathed into him of My Spirit) (al-Hijr: ۲۹; Sad: ۷۲) refers to the)"فيه من روحى same issue."

Cleansing the Heart Thus, intuitive knowledge will not be obtained unless by means of cleansing the heart of anything other than love of God; and man will not fall in love with Absolute Perfection except through obtaining Divine knowledge. Therefore, the main problem is that cleansing the heart of the love of worldly desires is not an easy task. How can the heart be set free from its attachment to the love of this "hag with a made up face"?

From the viewpoint of the reverend Shaykh what can cleanse the heart is the same thing that can help man attain the reality of monotheism, i. e., the things pointed out in previous chapter: Perpetual presence, seeking help from the Ahl al-Bayt (a), begging at nights (nightly supplications and whispered prayers), and benevolence to people.

The Way to Love God

The reverend Shaykh placed a special emphasis on "benevolence to people" in creating proximity to God(۱) and loving Him. He believed that the means to love of God is affection to God's creatures and serving people, especially the oppressed and the ones stuck in a plight.

The Holy Prophet (s) is quoted as saying:

"الخلق عيال الله فأحب الخلق الى الله من نفع عيال الله وأدخل على أهل بيتٍ سروراًٌ"

"People are the family of God; the most favorite person with God is the one who is the most beneficial to the family of God and who

۱- See "The Way to Proximity to God", Chapter Six, Part ۳.

makes them happy."(۱)

In another hadith it is narrated that the Holy Prophet (s) was asked: 'Who is the most favorite person with God?' The Holy Prophet (s) replied: 'The one who is the most beneficial to the people.(۲)

It is also related in another hadith that the Almighty God told the Holy Prophet (s) on the eve of Ascension (Mi'raj):

"يا أحمد! محبتى محبه الفقراء، فأدْن الفقراء وقرب مجلسهم منك... فان الفقراء أحبائى"

"O Ahmad (Muhammad (s))! Loving me is to love the poor; so draw the poor near to yourself and go to their gatherings, for the poor are My friends."(۳)

One of the Shaykh's disciples said: 'On the Shaykh's recommendation, I used to go to Neka (a city in the Mazandaran province, northern Iran) several times to have the audience with Ayatollah Kuhistani. On one occasion I was going to the bus station on Nasir Khusraw Avenue to reserve a ticket for Neka, when I ran into the Shaykh. He asked me where I had been going. I said: 'To Neka to meet Ayatollah Kuhistani.' He said:

"His style is asceticism, come with me to teach you the way of loving God!"

Then he took my hand and led me to Imam Khomeini (ra) Avenue (named so after the Islamic Revolution) which then was covered with cobblestones, and down the street turned to an alley and knocked a door. The shabby building housed a number of poor and wretched children and adults. Pointing at them, the Shaykh

۱- Al-Kafi, II, ۱۶۴: ۶.

.Ibid. ۱۶۴:۷ -۲

.Irshad al-Qulub, ۱۹۹ -۳

:said

Fulfilling the needs of these desperate people makes one a lover of God! This is your" ".lesson. With Ayatollah Kuhistani, you had ascetic lessons but here is lesson of loving

Ever since, for about ten years the Shaykh and I would go to the shanty quarters of the city to help the needy; the Shaykh introduced them to me and I supplied them .with provisions

Sincerity of Friends of God

point

One of the principal concerns of the Shaykh in training his disciples was emphasizing sincerity not only in belief and devotion but also in all actions. Most often he stressed :that

The true religion is what is being preached on the pulpits, albeit lacking two things:" sincerity and love of God Almighty .These two must be added to the subject matter of ".the preaching

All Deeds for God's Sake

One of the Shaykh's most valuable and instructive statements was his following :keynote

"!Everything is good, but (only if it is) for God's sake"

Sometimes he pointed at his sewing machine and said: "Look at this sewing machine! All its small and big parts have the manufacturer's trade mark...denoting that the smallest nut in this machine must bear the mark (name) of the manufacturer too. All ".the endeavors of a faithful person must also bear the name of God

In the Shaykh's training school, the spiritual seeker must deliberate before doing

anything to see if it is illegal, avoid if for God's sake, and if it is legal and lawful do, it for God's sake. He must also

see if it is lawful but pleasing to his carnal soul as well, he must first ask for God's forgiveness for his carnal desire and then proceed with that task for God's sake.

Eating and Taking Rest for God's Sake!

According to the guideline given by the Holy Prophet (s) to Abu Dhar:

"يا ابا ذر، لتكن لک فی کل شیء نیه صالحه، حتی فی النوم والأکل"

"O Abu Dhar! You should have pure intention in all your deeds, even in (lawful) eating and drinking."(۱)

The Shaykh would frequently assert to his disciples: "All your tasks must be for God's sake, even your eating and sleeping. Once you drink this cup of tea while remembering God, your heart will be radiated with Divine light. But if you drink it for the sake of satiating your desire, it will turn to what you had wanted (other than God)!"(۲)

Ayatollah Mahdawi Kani said: 'At the beginning of my studies as a talaba (an Islamic seminary student) when I was about fourteen or so, once I wanted to make a garment for myself-after having given back the clothes I had borrowed from the late Burhan.

I went to a person called Shaykh Rajab Ali Khayyat, taking the cloth with me to have a garment made. His workshop was in his house at a room near the doorway. I sat for a time, then the Shaykh came in and said: "What do you want to become?" I answered: "A talaba." He said: "Do you want to become a talaba or a human

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۱- Mizan al-Hikmah, XIII, ۶۵۷۸: ۲۰۹۹۹.

.See "Material and Spiritual Blessings", Chapter Four, Part ۳ -۲

'?being

I got somewhat surprised at the way an ordinary man talked to a religious student. He :went on to say

Do not get annoyed! Being a talaba is fine, but it is meant to become a (real) human" being. I give you a piece of advice to remember; do not forget your Divine goal from now on that you are still young and are not polluted (with sins) yet. Whatever you do, try to do it for God. Even when you eat a delicious food, eat it with the intention to gain energy to pray and serve in the way of God. Do not ever forget this advice all through ".your life

!Stitch for God's Sake

:He would say to a shoemaker

When you make a shoe, first of all do it for God's sake, and then stitch it fine and firm" ".so that it would not tear apart too soon and last longer

:He would say to a tailor

"!Any cut you stitch, try to stitch it for God and firmly"

!Come Over for God's sake

One of the Shaykh's disciples described his recommendation on sincerity by quoting :him as saying

When you come over (to the Shaykh's house), come for the sake of God; if you come" "!for my sake, you'll be at a loss

.His state of mind was amazing; he called people to God not to himself

!Blow into Fire for God's Sake

The Shaykh's son related: 'Shaykh Abdul Karim Hamid was an errand-boy at my

father's workshop. One day he was blowing into the fire in the iron-the old

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:Iranian iron that heated up by the fire in its cavity-when my father told him

"?Abdul Karim! You know how to blow into the iron"

He answered: 'No, sir. How should I blow?' My father said: "Purse your lips and blow "!for God's sake

!Love them for the Sake of God

:One of the Shaykh's disciples said that the Shaykh told him in a private session

Your mind is wandering such and such a place; it's all right, but it should be for the" ".sake of God

One day I went to visit the Shaykh along with a friend of mine. The Shaykh pointed to :my friend's heart and said

I see two children there; that's fine, but the heart is the place of God; interest in" ".children must be for the sake of God

:He used to say

The religious people's work is all fine, but they have to replace their 'egos' with" "."God

Kiss for the Sake of God! Ayatollah Fahri described the Shaykh's recommendation for sincerity as follows: 'The phrase he frequently used was "work for the sake of God". He so frequently used this phrase when addressing his disciples that "working for God's sake" had turned into a motto for them. Like a mahout (elephant driver) who repeatedly strikes the elephant's head with the hammer, the Shaykh would also ."frequently strike his disciples' mind with (the motto) "Work for God

He would give examples from himself and others in this respect to have them master

this instruction. In all states he stressed to

:everyone to work for the sake of God. He would say

God must be present in all your aspects of life; even when you go home at night and" "!kiss your wife, kiss her for the sake of God

Those who were trained at the Shaykh's school achieved spiritual stations and .intuitions as a result of practicing this instruction

?What have you done for God's Sake

One of the Shaykh's children related the following account: 'One day my father and I :went to Bibi Shahrbano. On the way we ran into an ascetic, and my father asked him

"?What has been the outcome of your (ascetic) self-discipline"

.The ascetic bowed down and picked up a stone from the ground

The stone turned into a pear and he offered it to my father, saying: 'Here you are, !help yourself

:My father cast a glance at him and said

You did this for me, let me know what you have done for God?!" Hearing this, the" !ascetic burst into tears

!Woe to me! Woe to me

One of the Shaykh's disciples who had spent around thirty years with him quoted the :Shaykh as saying to him

I saw the spirit of one of the scholars of spirituality -who had been residing in one of" the big cities in Iran -in Barzakh, who pitied himself, beating on his thighs and saying: '!'Woe to me! I have come (out of the world) with no pure and sincere actions in hand

I asked him why he is doing so. He answered: 'In my life once I made

p: ۱۳۸

acquaintance with a businessman who introduced to me some of his esoteric features. When I parted with him, I decided to practice asceticism so that I could also acquire an insight to have intuitions and to see the barzakh and the unseen. I practiced self- discipline for thirty years before I succeeded. At that time death knocked at my door. Now (in the barzakh) they are telling: By the time you ran into that man of spirituality, you were indulged in your carnal desires, and after that you spent about thirty years of your life in achieving intuitions and vision of the states in "!?barzakh. Now tell what you have done purely for Us

To Become Good for God's Sake

One of the contemporary scholars who is a professor of ethics and mysticism said: 'I asked the reverend Shaykh Rajab Ali Khayyat about myself to see what he thought of :me. He answered

Agha Hajj Shaykh! You want to become good but for yourself ! Try to become good " "!for the sake of God

Dear readers! you are noticing how the reverend Shaykh, with his Divine insight, could realize the subtle borders between monotheism and polytheism and warned about them. It is true, these borders make up the path which is thinner than a hair. There are no other ways except this path to attain the reality of monotheism and the .paradise of meeting with God

!Go on a Pilgrimage for the Sake of God

One of the Shaykh's disciples said: Once I asked his reverence if he consented to go on a pilgrimage of

p: ۱۳۹

:Imam al-Reza (a) to Mashhad together. He replied

"!I am not permitted (to do anything) on my own"

At first his reply sounded a bit weird to me as to how he did not have permission to go on a pilgrimage. Until some time later I found out that a devotee (of God) has no personal opinion other than what God wills for him and that his tasks are subject to God's permission and consent. Later on, a talk about sincerity and pilgrimage to that :blessed Imam (a) was raised. The Shaykh said in that relation

If we go on a pilgrimage for the sake of God and have nothing in mind other than" .God's pleasure, the holy Imam (a) will receive such a pilgrim with special favor

On one of my pilgrimages to Imam al-Reza (a) I had no intention but the pleasure of God, the holy Imam (a) did me such a great favor that I was extremely enamored. If this favor could be put into words I would tell how it felt. However, if you wish to perceive this kindness and favor, you have to purify yourself to be able to see what I "!saw

Fruits of Sincerity

:The Shaykh would frequently use the following phrase in his talks

Whoever is with Allah, Allah will be with him."(1) Whoever works wholeheartedly for" :God, God will be for him. He would say

"من کان لله کان الله له

".You be for God, He and His angels will be for you"

Sometimes he

This statement is related in hadith sources such as Bihar al-Anwar, LXXXII, ۱۹۷; al- -۱ Wafi, V, ۷۸۴; and Rawzat al-Muttaqin, ۳, ۱۹۵ without attributing to any infallible Imam and just with the phrase "as it is related" which denotes its being a hadith. Sadr al-Muta'allihin Shirazi has attributed the statement to the Holy Prophet (s) in his

interpretation of the Holy Qur'an I, ۷۶. Research indicated the oldest source bearing this hadith is Khawaja Nasir al-din Tusi's Akhlaq Muhtashami, XII, ۱۲۲. In that source, .however it is not attributed to any of the Infallible either

:said

If one does not manage to act accordingly, even talking about it also makes a" ".desirable impact on one's spirituality

Divine Guidance

The Shaykh regarded enjoyment of special Divine Guidance as one of the most ,significant blessings of sincerity. Accordingly, by virtue of the verse

(والذين جاهدوا فينا لنهدينهم سبلنا)

And those who strive in Our cause -We will certainly guide them) (al-Ankabut: ۶۹), he) :expounded the idea as follows

If you rise up for God, all the universe's assets will guide and support you. Since their" perfection lies in merging in you, they wish to deliver what they naturally possess to achieve real perfection. If man rises up for God, all existing creatures will line up in his ".cause to present to him what they possess and to be his guide

The Shaykh regarded as necessary the highest levels of sincerity in order to enjoy special Divine guidance that is indeed God's special training. That is, man must have no other goals in his endeavors than the pleasure of Almighty God; he should even (disregard his own perfection too.(۱

:He said in this regard

As long as man views his own perfection, he will not achieve the Truth. All faculties" and means at man's disposal must be utilized in the way of attaining (union with) God. ".In this case Almighty God would train man for Himself

The Fragrance of God in Deeds

:The reverend Shaykh asserted

Once you know God, whatever you do should be purely out of love and sincerity. Do" not even consider your own

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See "Guidelines of Imam Khomeini (ra) to his son Hajj Ahmad Agha (ra)", Chapter -۱ .Seven, Part ۳

perfection, as carnal soul is very shrewd and subtle and very persistent in imposing .(itself (on man's sublime intentions

As long as man wants himself and attends to himself, his tasks are mundane and not Divinely motivated. However, once he abandons self-centrism and becomes God-Oriented, his tasks turn Divine and his acts get the Divine fragrance; and that have a :(sign which is revealed in the words of Imam al-Sajjad (a

"وما أطيب طعم حبک"

(How pleasant is the flavor of your love!"(۱"

Overpowering the Satan

One of the blessings of working for the sake of God is overpowering the Satan. The :Shaykh said in this regard

The one who rises up for God's sake will encounter the carnal soul along with" seventy five armies and the Satan with its troops who will also stand up to destroy The troops of Allah are verily victorious.' Intellect also '"جنـد الله هـم الغـالبون" him, but :consists of seventy-five armies which will not let the devoted worshipper be defeated

Surely, you will have no authority over My sincere(ان عبـادی لیس لـک علیهـم سـلطان) worshippers.) (al-Hijr: ۴۲) If you are not interested in other than God, the carnal self and the Satan will not have any authority over you; rather, they will be overwhelmed ".by you

:He would also say

There is a trial in every breath you take. You should see if it is taken with a Divine" "!motivation or it is mingled with a satanic motivation

Opening up of the Heart's Eye

The reverend Shaykh believed that as long as man is directed

.Imam al-Sajjad (a), The Psalms of Islam, XV -۱

toward other than God and seeks other than Him, he is in reality a polytheist and his heart is contamినated with polytheism, referring in this respect to the holy verse (انما المشركون نجس)(al-Tawbah: ۲۸) (Verily, the polytheists are impure and filthy.)

As long as the heart is dusted with polytheism, man will not be able to get familiar with :realities of Being. Thereupon the Shaykh said

As long as man's attention is directed toward other than God, he will be veiled to the" ".realities of Being and unaware of the inward aspects of Creation

!O Hafiz, you are the veil to the path, move away'

'.Happy is he who fares this path unveiled

However, if man purifies his heart of the dust of polytheism, he will be entrusted with :mysteries of creation. The reverend Shaykh said accordingly

If one works for the sake of God, his heart's eye opens up. If you watch out for your" heart and do not admit other than God in it, you will be able to see what other people are unable to see, and hear what other people are unable to hear."(۱)

Material and Spiritual Blessings

The Holy Qur'an asserts that if someone is after the life of this world, obedience of

God will not reduce his worldly life; rather, obedience to God will provide him with the eternal pure life as well as the worldly blessings of this life:

(من کان یرید ثواب الدنیا فعند الله ثواب الدنیا والآخره)

(Whoever desires reward in the life of this world,

۱- See "Opening up the Heart's Eye", Chapter Three, Part ۳.

then (he should know) with Allah is the reward of this life as well as that of the Hereafter.) (al-Nisa: ۱۳۴)

In other words, the Almighty God is (literally) everything; the one who had God, possesses everything.(۱) One of the Shaykh's devotees said: The reverend Shaykh asked me what my job was. I said I was a carpenter. He said:

"Do you strike the hammer on the nail in remembrance of God or in remembrance of money?! If you strike in remembrance of money, you'll only get the money, but if you strike in remembrance of God, you'll both get the money and attain (union with) God."(۲)

I taught them for God's Sake

One of the Shaykh's disciples quotes him as Saying:

"A very large crowd had attended the funeral procession of Ayatollah Burujirdi (ra) and it turned to be a very magnificent function. In a spiritual state, I asked him how he happened to be paid such great homage. He replied: I used to teach all talabas (Islamic seminary students) for the sake of God."

God Tackled our Problem!

One of his devotees quotes the Shaykh as saying:

"My son was summoned to do his military service, and I was about to go along with

him to take care of this problem when a couple came to me to help them tackle their dispute. So I stayed on to solve their problem. In the afternoon, my son returned home and said: Near the military garrison I came down with such a severe headache that my head got swollen. The

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What lacks the one""مالذی فقد من وجدک؟" :As pointed out in the supplication or Arafah -۱ "?who has found you

.See "Eating and Taking Rest for the Sake of God!" Chapter Four, Part ۳ -۲

doctor (in the military garrison clinic) examined me and diagnosed me as exempt from military service. As soon as I left the garrison, I felt not a single trace of the headache "!and swelling

:The Shaykh went on to say

".We (I) proceeded to tackle people's problem, and God tackled our problem"

The Dhikr of the Friends of God

point

The reverend Shaykh had a basic guideline that on various occasions he would repeatedly emphasize it. Although this guideline is adopted from Islamic traditions, .the significant point here is the Shaykh's personal experience in that respect

In principle, the significance of this divine man and righteous servant lies in the fact .that his sayings are his own findings and inner expenence

Perpetual Presence

The reverend Shaykh insisted to train his disciples in a way that they see themselves in all states in the presence of the God Almighty. And this is in fact the instructive and :significant words of the Holy Prophet (s) who said

"اذكروا الله ذكرا خاملا، قيل: وما الذكر الخامل؟ قال: الذكر الخفى"

Remember God by the khamil dhikr. He was asked: 'What is khamil dhikr?' He replied:" (The silent and covert dhikr."(۱)

:In another hadith, His Holiness (s) said

"يفضل الذكر الخفى الذى لا تسمعه الحفظه على الذى تسمعه سبعين ضعفاً"

The covert dhikr that is not heard by the angels is seventy times better than the dhikr" "that they hear it

The superiority of the covert remembrance of God over the overt one is due to its significant and determining role in man's development

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.Mizan al-Hikmah, IV, ۱۸۶۶: ۶۴۹۱ and ۶۴۹۳ -۱

Remembrance by tongue is easy; however, remembrance by the heart, especially when done uninterruptedly, is too difficult. Thus, Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (a) views it as one of the most difficult tasks

"ثلاث من أشد ما عمل العباد: إنصاف المؤمن من نفسه، ومواساه المرء أخاه، وذكر الله على كل حال، وهو ان يذكر الله عز وجل عند المعصيه يهم بها فيحول ذكر الله بينه وبين تلك المعصيه، وهو قول الله عز وجل (ان الذين اتقوا اذا مسهم طائف من الشيطن تذكروا فاذا هم مبصرون)

Three tasks are the most difficult for people equity by the faithful, a man's financial" assistance to bis brothers, and remembrance of God in all states, i.e., man should remember God when encoumering a (temptat;on tn) sin and decision tn commit it Then this remembrance of God prevents him from sins, as per the words of Almighty God (Verily, those who are pious when an evil thought touches them by Satan, they (invoke Allah's remembrance, (then) they see things clearly) (al-A'raf ۲۰۱)"(۱)

In another hadith, viewing equity, charity and perpetual dhikr as among the most difficult Divine obligations, Imam al-Sadiq (a) clarifies that what he means by

remembrance in all states is not merely remembrance by tongue, although it is also :regarded as remembrance of God

"أما أني لا ـ أقول: سبحان الله، والحمـد لله، ولا ـ اله الا الله، والله أكبر، وإن كان هـذا من ذاك، ولكن ذكر الله فى كل موطن إذا هجمتَ على طاعته أو معصيته"

,By remembrance of God, I do not mean reciting Subban Allahi, wal Hamduli'lallahi"

p: ۱۴۶

Mizan.al-Hikmah, IV, ۱۸۵۶ ۶۴۵۴ -۱

wa la ilaha il Allahu wa Allahu Akbar; although these are also regarded as dhikr, but what is meant is remembering God when encountering obedience and disobedience (of God."(۱

It is extremely difficult for man to see himself in the presence of God. If man attains such consciousness, it is impossible that carnal vain desires and Satan overpower him .and force him to disobey his lord

How to Liberate from Carnal Soul and the Satan

The reverend Shaykh said: "There in no way to liberate from the evils of carnal soul except by attention to God and perpetual presence in Him. As long as you are in His presence and you are not disconnected from God, the carnal soul will not be able to ".deceive you

:With reference to the following verse

(ومن يعشُ عن ذكر الرحمن نقيض له شيطاناُ فهو له قرين)

If anyone withdraws himself from remembrance of (Allah) the Most Gracious, We) (appoint for him an evil one, to be an intimate companion to him.) (al-Zukhruf: ۳۶

:The Shaykh would say on many occasions

Whenever man's attention is turned away from God, the carnal soul and the Satan"

".that are lying in ambush will capture his heart and start their job from there

!Take your Hands Off me

:One of the Shaykh's disciples quoted him as saying

I saw my own carnal self in (my) spiritual state; I told it to take his hands off me! It" "!responded: Do not you know that I will not take my hands off you until I destroy you

Perhaps due to the same intuition the Shaykh

Ibid. IV, ۱۸۵۶: ۶۴۵۵ -۱

:was very interested in the following couplets

.In the school of Eternity Your Beauty guided me'

Your Bounteous Grace assisted me to be enslaved by You. My vile carnal soul favored .all vanities

'.Your Blessed Emanation liberated me from its clutches

Divine Grace descends on man's heart through perpetual remembrance of Him. Once God's remembrance enters the heart, as the first step it will purify the heart of satanic temptations and carnal vanities and prepares it for receiving Divine Grace from the .Absolute Bestower of Bounties

:In this respect, Amir al-Mu'minin Ali (a) says

"أصل صلاح القلب اشتغاله بذكر الله"

The quintessence of heart's soundness lies in its occupation with remembrance of" (God."(۱

Feeling perpetually present in the Presence of Almighty God liberates man from the

captivity of the carnal soul and the Satan and consequently cures various maladies of :the soul. Imam Ali (a) is quoted as saying

"ذکر الله مطرده الشیطان"

"Remembrance of God drives the Satan away."(۲)

"ذکر الله دواء أعلال النفوس"

"Remembrance ofGod is the medicine for the soul's maladies."(۳)

"یا من اسمه دواء وذکره شفاء"

"O He whose Name is a Remedy, whose remembrance is cure."(۴)

Through perpetual remembrance of God, the Divine grace grants the heart a human life and makes it radiant, reinforces the soul, makes the man of heart intimate with his ;God, gradually gracing man with the elixir of love and affection

Imam Ali (a), the great knower of Allah and the one familiar with the maladies of :human soul, said accordingly

"من ذکر الله

۱- Mizan al-Hikmah, IV, ۱۸۴۶: ۶۳۹۴

۲- Ibid, IV, ۱۸۵۰: ۶۴۲۷.

۳- Ibid, IV, ۱۸۵۰: ۶۴۱۸.

۴- Ibid, IV, ۱۸۵۰: ۶۴۱۹.

سبحانه أحیی الله قلبه ونور عقله ولبه"

"Whoever remembers God Almighty, God will enliven his heart and enlighten his mind and intellect."(۱)

"مداومه الذکر قوت الأرواح"

"Perpetually remembering God gives sustenance to the soul."(2)

"الذکر مفتاح الأنس"

"Remembrance of God is the key to proximity (to Him)."(3)

"من أکثر ذکر الله أحبه"

"Whoever remembers God abundantly, God will love him."(4)

What was briefly brought up here is a small part of the blessings of remembering God in life and in enrichment and development of human beings.(5) With some deliberation on the above mentioned, however, it will be clarified that how valuable is any moment that we are remembering God and how detrimental is any breath that we take without remembenng God.

Remembrance of God in Sleep

Dr. Thubati said: Once we were invited by a member of the session to his house for lunch. After lunch, everybody proceeded to rest. I was lying down and remembering God and thinking in this relation with my eyes closed. At this moment, the Shaykh who was sitting before me and noticing me recommended to the friends:

"You should be remembering God even when you are sleeping."

That was the only time I heard him recommend remembering God even at sleep in that session and I do not remember him mentioning it anywhere else.

A Message from Barzakh

One of the Shaykh's friends related: Once I had an audience with the Shaykh who said:

"I saw a young man in barzakh who was saying: 'You do not know what is going on here! When you

.Ibid. IV, ۱۸۴۸: ۶۳۹۹ -۱

.Ibid. IV, ۱۸۴۸: ۶۴۰۳ -۲

.Ibid. IV, ۱۸۵۰: ۶۴۲۲ -۳

.Ibid. IV, ۱۸۴۲: ۶۴۳۵ -۴

For more information about the impact of God's remembrance in life, see Mizan al- -۵ .Hikmah, under the entry: "Al-Dhikr", Thamarat al-Dhikr

come here you will find out; any breath that you have taken for other than God has '.ended up to your loss

Virtues of some Dhikrs

When we talk about the virtues (benefits) of dhikrs in the school of the Shaykh, it must be remembered that his is a school of love not of outcome and results, and that he who does not seek anything other than God, the one who does not even seek his own perfection, will gain results. Similarly, whatever the results of remembrance of God, .the goal mustn't be anything other than God

Giving Importance to Two Dhikrs

One of the Shaykh's devotees said: The Shaykh regarded Istighfar (asking forgiveness) and Salawat as highly important, and had figured out that these two .dhikrs were two wings for the wayfarer to fly with

:The Shaykh would say

If you send Salawat abundantly in your lifetime, the Apostle of God (s) will kiss your" ".lips at death

On Overcoming Carnal Desires

Lahawla wa la quwwata illa billa "لاحول ولاقوه الا بالله العلى العظيم" :Perseverance in the dhikr .۱ al 'Ali al- 'Azim (there is no might neither power except through Allah, the most High, ".(the Supreme-in-Glory

۲. The dhikr: "يا دائم ويا قائم" "Ya Da'im-u ya Qa 'im (O Eternal! O Persistent!)

۳. In order to suppress the unruly carnal desires, recite the following dhikr thirteen or one hundred times in the morning and evening: "اللهم لك الحمد وآليك المشتكى وأنت المستعان" "Allahumma lakalhamdu wa alayka 'l mushtaka wa Anta al-Musta'an (O Allah! All

praise is due to You, complaints are made to You, and You are the one whose help is sought for)."

۴. Recite one hundred times every night: "يازكى الطاهر من كل آفه بقدسه" " Ya Zakiyyut Tahiru min kulli afatin bi kudsih (O You who are) pure and clean from any bane through Your sanctity).(۱)

The reverend Shaykh stated while recommending the above dhikr for suppressing the carnal desires:

"I myself have applied it and started (the spiritual seeking) through reciting it. One day I recited this dhikr so many times that my carnal soul died. I said to myself: I will continue until my (worldly) existence turn into non-existence. However, when for a time I neglected reciting it as is expedient to human nature, I found my carnal soul was alive. Obviously anyone who directs his attention toward the world his carnal soul will strengthen; reciting this dhikr is effective in overcoming the carnal soul."

Suppressing the Satanic Temptations when Encountering Women other than our Next of Kin

Dr. Farzam related: the reverend Shaykh Rajab Ali considered the dhikr

"يـا خير حـبيب ومحبـوب صـل على محمـد وآلـه| Ya khayra Habibin wa Mahbubin, Salli 'ala Mubammadin wa Alihi (O Best of Lovers and the Best of Beloved! Bless Muhammad and his Family)) very effective after one glances at a woman other than his next of kin. He frequently advised me to recite this dhikr to remain secure from the Satan's temptation. He said:

When you glance at a woman other than your next of kin, if you do not enjoy looking" at her

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.This dhikr is an item in the Dua -i Hazrat-i Idris (a). See Misbah al-Mutahajjid p. ۶۰۱ -۱

you are sick! But if you enjoy, you ought to cast your look away from her and say: ya khayra Habib Which means: O God! I cherish you. These are not likeable; whatever is "... .mortal is not likeable

For the Love of God

.Reciting one thousand times Salawat (every night) for forty nights

(For Purifying the Batin (the inner

The reverend Shaykh regarded the recitation of the Sura al-Saffat every morning and .the Sura al-Hashr every night as very helpful in purification of the batin

One of the Shaykh's devotees said that he advised him to recite the Sura al-Hashr every night, and he believed that the Greatest Name (of God) is mentioned in the .latter ayahs of this blessed Sura

(For Attaining the Honor of Meeting Wali 'Asr (aj

,Reciting one hundred times the holy Sura

(رب أدخلنی مُدخل صدق وأخرجنی مُخرج صدق وأجعل لی من لدنک سلطاناً نصیراً)

O my Lord! Let my entry be by the Gate of Truth and Honor, and likewise my exit by) the Gate of Truth and Honor; and grant me from Thy Presence an authority to aid .(me)) (al-Isra: ۸۰), up to forty nights

As narrated, many of the Shaykh's students have found the honor of meeting Imam al-'Asr (aj) through persevering with this dhikr; although at the time of meeting they :have not realized the Imam (a). Two instances are given as follows

How Ayatollah Ziyarati Attained this Honor .۱

One of the Shaykh's disciples narrated: 'The reverend Shaykh had given instructions to the late Ayatollah Ziyarati in Mahdi Shahr to meet Wali' Asr (AJ) -apparently by the

above-mentioned dhikr. After having performed the instructions, he went to the .Shaykh and said he had done what he instructed but to no effect

The Shaykh deliberated for a while and said: "When you were performing prayers in the Masjid, a Sayyid told you: 'Wearing a ring on the left hand is abominated'. And you replied: 'All the abominated (Makruh) are permissible'. That holy man was Imam al-".('Asr (a

How a Shopkeeper found this Honor .۲

Two shopkeepers undertook to provide for the needs of a Sayyid family. One of them began the dhikr instructed by the Shaykh to find the honor of meeting Imam al-'Asr (a). Before the fortieth night, one of the children of the Sayyid family went to his shop and asked him for a bar of soap. The shopkeeper grumbled that why her mother did not send him to such and such -meaning the other shopkeeper - to get what they !want

This man said: When I went to sleep at the same night, I heard someone was calling me. I went out to check but I did not see anyone. I went to bed again; I heard that voice calling me by name. The third time I went out to see who it was. When I opened :the house door, I saw a Sayyid with covered face who said

".We can sustain our children, but we wish you to attain a (high) position"

For Solving Problems and Curing Illnesses

Dr. Farzam said: The reverend Shaykh would recommend some Qur'anic verses and supplications along with sending, Salawat as dhikr

:for solving problems and remedy to illnesses, such as

"رب انی مغلوب فانتصر وأنت خیر الناصرین"

Rabb inni maghlubun, fantasir wa anta Khayru'l Nasirin (O Lord! I am defeated. Help" "(!me Thou who art the Best of Helpers

:Once I had a problem, the Shaykh instructed me to say the following dhikr

"رب انی مسنی الضر وأنت أرحم الراحمین"

Rabb inni massani al-durr wa Anta Arham al-Rahimin (O Lord! I am afflicted with a" loss, and Thou art the Most Merciful)." He would say: "These are dhikr, say them along :with Salawat!" Or when our children got sick, he would recommend us to say

"یا من اسمه دواء، وذکره شفاء صل علی محمد وآل محمد"

O He whose Name is a remedy, whose remembrance is a cure! Bless Muhammad (s)" "!(and the Family of Muhammad (s

For Averting Heat and Cold

One of the Shaykh's disciples related: 'On my first journey to the noble Makkah for Hajj pilgrimage I asked the Shaykh what I should do for warding off the extreme heat. He instructed me to resort to the following verses to protect myself from cold and :heat

(سلام علی ابراهیم * کذلک نجزی المحسنین)

Peace and salutation to Abraham! Thus indeed do We reward those who do right.)) ((al-Saffat: ١٠٩, ١١٠

(یا نار کونی برداً وسلاماً علی ابراهیم)

(O Fire! Be thou cool, and (a means of) safety for Abraham.) (al-Anbiya: ٦٩)

point

One of the most important instructions of the Shaykh was planning regular periods to spend in seclusion with God for supplications and whispered prayers which

:he referred to as "begging at the doorstep of God" and stressed

Recite supplications for an hour every night; even if you are not in the right mood for" ".it, do not give up seclusion with God

:He also said

There are amazing blessings in waking up at dawn and the last one third of the night." Whatever you want from God can be obtained through begging at dawns. Do not be negligent of begging at dawns; whatever blessings you achieve can be gained by that. A lover hardly goes to sleep and yearns nothing but union with the beloved. Dawn is ".the time of meeting and union with Him

.Any treasure of happiness that God granted to Hafiz

.Was by virtue of supplications at nights and litanies at dawns

Supplications of the Shaykh

The reverend Shaykh would recite the following supplications very frequently and recommended his disciples to recite them too: supplications of Yastashir, Adila, Tawassul; whispered prayers of Amir al-Mu'minin Ali (a) in the Masjid of Kufa which begins with, "اللهم انی أسألـک الأمـان یوم لا-ینفع مـال ولا بنون" "Allahumma inni as 'aluka al- aman yawma la yanfa 'u malun wa la banun (O Lord! I beseech You to bestow safety on me the day neither property nor children will be of any benefit)," as well as the fifteen whispered prayers (Munajat Khamsa 'Ashar) of Imam al-Sajjad (a). From among the latter, the Shaykh stressed reciting 'The Whispered Prayer of the Utterly Poor'

(Munajat al- Mufta qirin) and especially 'The Whispered Prayer

:of the Devotees', (Munajat al-Muridin). He would say

".(Any of these fifteen Munajats (whispered prayers) has got its own virtues (blessing"

His Regular Supplication

Dr. Farzam narrated that one of the Shaykh's regular supplications was the following :one

O Lord! Teach, perfect, and train us for Thyself O Lord! O Sustainer! Prepare us for " ".meeting with Thyself

Thursday evenings, after prayers the reverend Shaykh would usually recite the Supplication of Kumayl or one of the above mentioned whispered prayers or .supplications, and commented on them

"!Recite the Supplication of Yastashir"

:Ayatollah Fahri(١) quoted the reverend Shaykh as saying

I said to God: O God! Everybody has amorous and joyful whispering with his Beloved;" I too wish to enjoy this blessing, what supplication should I read? I was told in a " .spiritual state to recite the supplication of Yastashir

.That was why he would recite the supplication of Yastashir very fervently and lively

"!'Find a Pretext to Seek 'Him"

The reverend Shaykh believed that if one has a real longing for God and is not content with other than Him, the Almighty God will eventually undertake his affairs and lead him to (sublime) destination. In this regard, the Shaykh related the following :interesting example

A child who is quibbling and throwing around every toy or sweetie that he is given" and would not stop the grudge and cry so much that finally his father embraces and caresses him; then he calms down. Thus if you do not care for the luxury of world and quibble and (this way) find a pretext

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۱ - Paramount Leader's Representative and the Friday Prayer leader of Zaynabiya in Damascus (Syria).

to seek 'Him', the Almighty God will finally undertake your affairs and raise you up. That's when you attain the real joy."

The Value of Weeping and Whispered Prayer

The reverend Shaykh believed that a man will merit whispered prayer and dialogue with God Almighty only when he drives away the love of other than God from his heart. If a person's vain desire is his god, he cannot say "O Allah!" truthfully. He said in this regard:

Weeping and whispered prayers are worthwhile only when man has no love other" than love of God in his heart."

An instructive intuition is quoted from the shaykh which confirms the above statement

A Penny in Response to "Ya Allah!"

Ayatollah Fahri quoted the Shaykh as saying

I was walking through the Bazaar when a beggar asked me to give him something. I" reached into my pocket, to give him some money, my hand felt a two Rial coin, I pushed it aside and found a ten shahr coin(۱) to give him instead. At noon I went to the mosque and said my prayers. After performing prayers, I raised my hands to pray to God, saying "O Allah!" As I uttered the phrase, I was shown (intuitively) the same two Rial coin which I left in my pocket (and held back from giving to the beggar)!"

:There are some points in this intuition to be pondered about

:The analogy of taking one's vain desire as his god, as the HolyQur'an clearly asserts ۱

(أفرأيت من اتخذ الهه هواه)

Then seest thou such a one as takes as his god his own)

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A ten shahi coin is worth a quarter of a two Rial coin -۱

(vain desire?) (al-Jathiyah: ۲۳

To the same extent that man obeys his vain desire, he will be away from God; he is, ۲ rather, a slave to what he desires and thus "God" turns into a "two Rial coin" in the !realm of intuition

It is worthwhile to give as charity what you like best. A believer should give away in .۳ the way of his Beloved what he is fond of rather than what is of no interest to him to :give away

(لن تنالوا البر حتى تنفقوا مما تحبون)

By no means shall you attain righteousness unless you give (freely) of that which you) (love.) (Ale 'Imran: ۹۲

The Way to Proximity to God

The reverend Shaykh believed that the way to attain proximity to God is through doing benevolence to people. If a person wants to find a proper state of mind for prayer and to enjoy dhikr and munajat with God, he must be at the service of God's :creatures for God's sake. He commented in this regard as follows

If you want to be graced with proximity to God and take pleasure in whispering" prayer to Him, practice benevolence to God's creatures by learning it from the Ahl al-:(Bayt (a) (about whom the Holy Qur'an says

ویطعمون الطعام علی حبه مسکیناً ویتیماً وأسیرا إنما نطعمکم لوجه الله لانرید منکم جزاءً ولا شکوراً

And they feed for the sake of Allah, the indigent, the orphan, and the captive -() saying), 'We feed you for the sake of Allah alone: no reward do we desire

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(from you, nor thanks.) (al-Insan: ۸, ۹

:He further said

What creates in man a spiritual state of servitude to God after performing obligatory" ".duties is doing good to people

?What should we implore from God

One of the most significant issues in supplication is that the supplicant should know what to say in his whispered prayer to God and what to request from Him. In his commentary on supplications, the reverend Shaykh emphasized on supplicatory :phrases such as

"یا غایه آمال العارفین" و "یا منتهی أمل الآملین" و "یا نعیمی وجنتی ویا دنیای وآخرتی"

Ya ghayati amali'l arifin", "Ya muntaha amali'l amilin", and " Ya na 'imi wa Jannati wa " Ya dunya i wa akhirati" (O Goal of the hopes of Thy knowers! O Ultimate abject of hope of the hopeful in thee! O my bliss and my garden! O my this world and my "(!Hereafter

:and then would say

Friends! Learn sagacity from your Imam (a)! See how the Imam whispers to God, saying' I am seeking refuge in you! I have come to embrace you! I want You (I rejoice !(in You

:The reverend Shaykh himself would say in his supplications and whispered prayer

"!O God! Accept these (supplications) as preliminary (means) to reunion with Thyself"

?What Does a Lover Want from the Beloved

After quoting the above instructions from the reverend Shaykh, Dr. Hamid Farzam said: 'Sometimes the reverend Shaykh would relate simple and delicate analogies in :order to explain highly mystical issues such as the following

A lover knocked at the door of his beloved's house. The latter asked: 'Do"

'?you want bread

.No.' Replied the lover'

'?Do you want water'

'.No'

'?What do you want then'

.I want you! Answered the lover

:Friends! The Landlord must be loved, not His feast and food. As Sa'di said

.If you expect benevolence from the Friend'

'.You are bound up in your self, not in love with the Friend

:He would recite the above poem to us and say

You must be in love only with God, and whatever you do must be only for Him. Be in" "!love with Himself; do not even worship Him for rewards

:He would sometimes tell me in a cute tone

Do something that your ringlets entangle yonder (meaning to fall in love with the" "!(Eternal Beloved

He would add some very befitting poems -especially from Hafiz - to his instructions

that were of great effect, such as the following: 'If you wish the Beloved may not .break off the union

'.Keep holding on to the (love) link so that He may hold on, too

"!Complain of being Forlorn"

The reverend Shaykh would say: "Whenever you manage to engage in nightly begging, complain of being forlorn and implore: 'O God! I have no power to challenge the carnal soul; it has crippled me, come to my aid and deliver me from its grip! 'And ".(also) appeal to the Ahl al-Bayt for intercession

:And then he would recite the following verse from the Holy Qur'an

(ان النفس لأماره بالسوء الا ما رحم ربی)

The (human) soul is certainly prone to evil, unless my Lord bestow his Mercy.) (Yusuf:) (۵۳

(The Real Reason for Appealing to the Ahl al-Bayt (a

The reverend

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:Shaykh used to say

Majority of people do not know what appealing to the Ahl al- Bayt (a) is for. They" appeal to the Ahl al-Bayt (a) for solving their own problems and difficulties of life,(۱) whereas we should go to the doorsteps of the Ahl al-Bayt (a) for traveling on the path to monotheism and the knowledge of God. This path is so difficult to pass and it is ".impossible for man to traverse this path without a light and guide

The Ziyarat of 'Ashura

One of the points that the reverend Shaykh stressed about appealing to the Ahl al- :Bayt (a) was recitation of ziyarat of 'Ashura and would relate accordingly

".I was instructed in a spiritual state to recite the ziyarat of Ashura"

:He recommended

Do not miss recitation of ziyarat Ashura as long as you are living. One of the Shaykh's" disciples continued reciting ziyarat of 'Ashura for forty years on the instructions of the .Shaykh

The Condition for Getting Answers to Supplications

One of the important conditions for a supplication to be answered is the lawfulness (being halal) of one's food. A person asked the Holy Prophet (s): 'I would like my :supplications replied'. His Holiness said

"طهر مأكلك ولا تدخل بطنك الحرام"

(Purify your food and avoid eating haram (unlawful)"(۲"

"!First, Pay for the Salt"

One of the Shaykh's disciples said: ' A group of us together with the Shaykh set out to go to (mount) Bibi Shahrbanu for supplication and whispered prayer. We bought some bread and cucumbers. Meanwhile, we picked some salt from the cart of the cucumber vendor (without paying

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See "How to reach the Reality of Monotheism", Chapter Two Part ۳ -۱

.Mizan al-Hikmah, IV, ۱۶۵۸: ۵۵۹۹ -۲

:for it) and then went up the mountain. When we arrived there the Shaykh said

Let's go down, we are rejected. They say: First pay for the salt and then come for" ".prayer and supplication

The Capacity of the Worshipper

One of the subtle issues for a worshipper to take into consideration is that his demands from God should be proportionate to his spiritual capacity; if he lacks the .required capacity he may put himself in trouble by supplication

One of the Shaykh's friends related: Once business happened to become sluggish and I was so upset about that. Until one day the Shaykh asked me why I was disturbed and I told him the story. He asked if I did not recite the ta'qibat (supplications read after obligatory prayers). I answered, yes. He asked what I read. I told him I read the :supplication of Sabah of Amir al-Mu'minin Ali (a) and he said

Instead of supplication of Saba, read the surah al-Hashr and the supplication of" ".'Adilah in your ta'qibat so that your problems vanish

:I asked him why I should not read Saba. He said

This du'a consists of such (heavy) statements and phrases that a person must have" .the capacity and capability to stand

Imam Ali (a) beseeches the Almighty God in this du'a: 'O God! Grant me a pain that I do not neglect you even in those moment (of suffering the pain)'. Thus, this dua demands the required capacity, and you have read it without having such capacity which has

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created these problems for you. So, instead of Sabah, you read the sura al-Hashr and ".dua Adilah; it will solve your problems God willing

After some time that I had started to read the sura al-Hashr and dua Adilah, one of my friends lent me ten thousand tomans, I worked with that money, bought a house, .and gradually my business improved, too

Courtesy of the Worshipper

Dr. Farzam also said: 'One of the things that the Shaykh emphasized about supplication was the courtesy of the worshipper. Dr. Farzam quotes the Shaykh as :saying in this respect

Once supplicating, one must be humble and fearful, and sit in a kneeled courtly" .position facing the qibla

Once my legs were discomforted, it crossed my mind to stretch my legs. The Shaykh :who was sitting behind me at the back of the room said

" .Sit aright; in supplication sit in a kneeled position and be courteous"

Benevolence of the Friends of God

point

Rendering service to people is one of the most important Islamic educational issues :that is highly emphasized in Islamic traditions. The Holy Prophet (s) said

"خير الناس من انتفع به الناس"

)The best of people are those who are (most) beneficial to (other) people.(١"

The Mystery of Creation

The reverend Shaykh highly stressed this educational principle. One of his disciples :quotes him as saying

I had a proximity to God; I implored Him to tell me the mystery of Creation. I was told" ".(by inspiration) that the mystery of Creation is benevolence to the people

:Imam Ali (a) said

"بتقوى الله أمرتم، وللاحسان

١- Mizan al-Hikmah, VIII, ٣۶٨٨: ١٢۶٣۵

والطاعه خلقتم"

You are commanded to God fearing and you are created for doing benevolence and"

(obeying (God)."(1)

One of the Shaykh's disciples said: 'Once I told him, "O Shaykh! Tell me something to be of benefit to me!" He twisted my ear and said:

"Serving people! Serving people!"

The Shaykh would say:

"If you want to find your way to the truth of monotheism, do good to people. The burden of monotheism is heavy and hazardous, and everyone is not able to tolerate that burden. However, benevolence to the people makes its tolerance easy."

And sometimes, he would say humorously:

"Help the creatures of God during the day and beg at His doorstep at night!"

The late Fayz Kashani (ra) put it in the following poem:

All through the night lament humbly at the doorstep of the Sustainer,

When the day breaks, help out the wounded at heart and the heart-broken.'

Giving Alms while in Poverty

An important aspect that is stressed in Islamic traditions in relation to giving alms and doing good to people is giving alms in poverty.

The Holy Prophet (s) said:

"ثلاثه من حقائق الایمان: الانفاق من الاقتار، وانصافک الناس من نفسک، وبذل العلم للمتعلم"

"There are three signs to faithfulness: Giving alms in poverty; equity toward people; and imparting knowledge to the seekers of knowledge."(2)

Similarly, Hafiz touches upon the impact of giving alms in poverty on the spiritual self-building of man in the following poem:

,In poverty, strive for joyfulness and intoxication'

That this elixir of the whole being turns a mendicant into a

.Ibid. I, ۴۲۸: ۱۵۵۵ -۱

.Ibid. XIII, ۶۴۵۲: ۲۰۶۶۴ -۲

'.Qarun

"!Fast and Give Alms"

One of the companions of Imam al-Kazim (a) related: 'I complained to his holiness of my poverty and said that I suffered poverty so severely that such and such took off :'his own clothing and gave it to me to wear! The holy Imam (a) said

"!Fast and give alms"

'?I said: 'Could I give alms from what I receive myself as alms, however meager it is

:The Imam (a) replied

Give alms from what God grants you as sustenance, even if you should spend it for" (yourself!"(۱

Benevolence to a Jobless Person Encumbered by a Large Family

One of the Shaykh's friends said: 'I was jobless and very depressed for some time, so I went to his house to find a way to get rid of the plight. As soon as I entered the :Shaykh's room and upon seeing me, he said

You are in such a veil that I have rarely seen one like that! Why have you given up" your trust in God? The Satan has covered you with a veil that you are unable to "!perceive on high

His words moved me very deeply and prompted a profound contrition in my heart. He

:said then

:Your veil is removed, but take heed it would not return." After that he said"

Somebody is jobless and sick and he has to run two families. If you can afford, go" ".and buy some cloth for his children and bring it here

Although I was jobless and broke, I went to an old friend's draper's and bought some cloth on

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.Al-Kafi, IV, ۱۸:۲ -۱

credit and took it to the Shaykh. Once I placed the pack of cloth before him, the .Shaykh looked at me and highly admired my endeavor

Dr. Thubati said: 'One of the things he highly stressed was doing good to people. He regarded this as extremely valuable and viewed it as one of very close and effective ways in faring the path to Allah. Thereupon, when one failed in his spiritual seeking, he :would recommend

Do not be negligent of benevolence and do good (to people as much as you are able" ".(to

,Serve the needy as long as you can in you life'

'.Either through your words, money, pen, or (taking) steps

He was himself also a pioneer in doing good to people. Someone had gotten into :trouble; he visited the reverend Shaykh who said

This person helps his relatives only through khums (one fifth levy) and do not do any" ".other good to them

.That meant giving only khums is not sufficient

Benevolence to the Sister

One of the Shaykh's disciples narrated: 'One day I requested the Shaykh to contact with my late father's spirit and ask him if there is anything I can do for him. The :Shaykh said

"!Recite the Surah Al-Hamd"

When I recited the sura, he immediately described the appearance and stature of my :father who had died forty years before. Then, he quoted my father

I do not need anything, tell my son to help out his younger sister with her household" ".needs

The Shaykh and Rendering Service to People

A study of various aspects

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of the Shaykh's blessed life indicates that this Divine man was a real paradigm in serving the afflicted people and solving their problems. Some instances of his services are pointed out in different parts of this book, especially in chapter three of part one. :Following, other instances of his concern with this issue are touched upon

(Recompense to the Prayer Leader as Ordered by Wali al-'Asr (aj

One of the Shaykh's disciples said: The late Suhayli(۱) (ra) would say: 'My shop was located at Abbasi crossroads in Tehran. Once on a hot summer day the Shaykh came :to my shop in a hurry and gave me some money and said

".Waste no time, immediately take this money to Sayyid Bihishti"

He was prayer leader to the Masjid of Hajj Amjad on Aryana Ave. I got the money at .once to his house and gave it to him

Later on I asked him (the Sayyid) about the story. He said: 'That day I had a guest and

nothing was to be found in my house. I went to the other room and appealed to '!Hazrat Wali 'Asr (aj), and then this (money) was sent to me

Also, the Shaykh himself said: "Hazrat Wali 'Asr (aj) commanded me to deliver this ".money to Sayyid Bihishti right away

Recommendation for Serving Meals

In addition to various attempts he made to help out people solve their problems directly and indirectly, the Shaykh received guests in his small house on different occasions, particularly on religious celebrations and placed great importance on serving meals to feed the faithful at home. He

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۱- He was one of the Shaykh's close companions; in part four it is described that the .Shaykh was held in his embrace when he died

always recommended (his disciples) to try to give meals in their houses, contending that if they give the money to the poor to prepare food for themselves it would not be .as worthwhile as giving meals at one's home

Dr. Farzam said: 'Serving meals to the poor and the needy was among his frequent .recommendations. Once I asked him what if we give the money instead

:He said

".No! Giving food is something different and more effective"

Every body knew that the reverend Shaykh would hold a feast on the auspicious night of ۱۵th Shaban, giving chicken and rice to all the guest from all walks of life who would sit attend his feast of benevolence. The Shaykh highly respected his guests and did his .best to make his guests feel at home

The Shaykh emphasized serving meals to the faithful and insisted on giving charity food in his house and observing ethics of hospitality, while he was always in financial

.difficulties himself

"!God Willing, it will be Sufficient"

In one of the feasts in the Shaykh's house, a large crowd had gathered for lunch so that both floors were filled up with guests. Although around thirty kilograms of rice had been cooked, the family were worried maybe the food would not be sufficient for all those present. When the Shaykh came to know about their apprehension, he faced :the cook-a religious scholar from Qum-and said

"!Sayyid Abul Husayn! What are they saying? Take the lid off the pot to take a look"

He took some

"!rice from the pot and said: "God willing, it will be sufficient

Accidentally, there happened to be not only no shortage of food but also lots of people .who had gathered at the door with their bowls did not leave empty-handed

The Blessings of Rendering Service to People

Doing good to people would entail many blessings in man's spiritual and material life. From the Shaykh's viewpoint, the most important effects of benevolence are radiance of the heart, emergence of a suitable state of mind for supplication and whispered)prayer, and proximity to God, which was already pointed out.(۱

Following are some interesting and instructive reminiscences portraying the blessings .ensued by rendering service to people

The Status of Hazrat Abdul Azim Hasani

One of the Shaykh's friends said: 'The Shaykh and I went on a pilgrimage of Sayyid al-: ((Karim (a). The Shaykh asked him (i. e. Hazrat Abdul Azim Hasani (a

"?How did you achieve such a status"

He (Hazrat Abdul Azim Hasani) answered: 'Through doing good to people; I used to write copies of the Qur'an, sell them with much difficulty, and giveaway the amount '!received to the poor

The Blessing of the Taxi Driver's Service

A disciple of the Shaykh said: In the year ۱۹۵۸ or ۱۹۵۹, I was working as a taxi driver. .Once I was in Bazar Jumihri Gharbi Avenue

There were no buses working that day, so many people were waiting in line for taxis. I saw two women, a tall and a short one, waved at me to stop. They said one of them was going to Lashkar Square, and

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.See "The way God loves", Chapter Three, Part ۳ -۱

the other one to Aryana Avenue, paying five Rials each. And I agreed to take them to .their destinations

The tall woman got off and paid for her fare, and I headed for Aryana Avenue to get .the short one to her destination. She was a Turk and did not speak Persian

I figured out she was murmuring to herself: 'O God! I am a Turk and do not know Persian and I do not know how to find my home either. Everyday I got on the bus and got off near my house with two qirans (Rials); I have done so much laundry since the .morning for just two tomans, now I have to pay five Rials for the taxi fare

I told her: 'Do not bother, I am a Turk too. I am going to Aryana Avenue and I will drop .you at your house. She got very happy

I finally found the address and stopped to let her get off. She took out a two-toman note and offered it to me. I said she did not need to pay, said goodbye and drove .away

A couple of days later I happened to have an audience with the Shaykh in the

company of a friend of mine. He was sitting in his humble room along with some other :people. After greeting, the Shaykh looked at me and-reading my mind-said

".You are awaiting on Thursday evenings. You will be present"

I was keeping a regular (religious) program in relation

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to the Wali al-'Asr (aj), and what he meant by "you will be present" was that I would be present at the time of the faraj (advent) of Imam al- 'Asr (aj). In view of the blessings I had been previously bestowed on by God Almighty, these words of the :Shaykh touched me greatly and we all cried a lot. The Shaykh, then said

You know what happened that you came to me? That short lady that got in your car" and you did not get any money from her, prayed to God for you, and the Almighty God "!answered her prayer and sent you to me

Assisting the Blind Man and the Luminosity of the Heart

The same noble man (the taxi driver) related: One day I was driving the same taxi on Salsabil Avenue when I saw a blind man waiting along the street for someone to help .him. I pulled up immediately and asked him where he wanted to go

.I want to cross the street.' Said the blind man'

.Where do you want to go from there?' I asked'

.I will not bother you any longer.' Said the man'

On my insistence the blind man said that he was going to Hashemi Avenue and I took .him to his destination

The next day when I went to see the Shaykh, he said immediately: "What is the "?incidence of the blind man that you gave a ride yesterday

:I told him the story. He said

"Since yesterday that you did it, the Almighty God has created a

".light which is still radiating in barzakh

Giving Meals to Forty People and the Healing of the Patient

One of the Shaykh's friends said: 'My son had an accident and was hospitalized. I went to the Shaykh and asked him what to do. He said: "Do not be upset. Buy a sheep, gather forty workers from around the neighborhood and make Abgusht(۱) and serve them the food; also ask a preacher to pray at the end of the feast. When those forty ".men say 'amen', your son will recover and return home

.I told this direction to several others too, and their requests were answered this way

Rain in a Drought

The reverend Shaykh's son related: 'Several farmers from Sari(۲) came to my father and said there was a severe drought in Sari, all plants were dried, and people were :under pressure. My father said

"!Go slaughter a cow and feed people"

The farmers sent a telegram to Sari to slaughter a cow and feed one thousand' people. It was said that at the feast it rained so heavily that the guest had trouble getting to the place. This event led to a good relation between the people of that '.region and the Shaykh. He was invited to attend sessions in Sari for several times

Giving Victuals by the Father to Beget a Child

The same person related: ' Someone failed to beget a child despite various treatments inside the country and abroad. One of the Shaykh's friends brought him to :the Shaykh and told him his problem. He said

"God will give them two sons and for each son they must slaughter

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.A traditional Iranian dish -١

.The administrative capital of Mazanderan Province, northern Iran -٢

".a cow and distribute among the people

:He asked what for. The Shaykh answered

".I requested from Imam al-Reza (a) and he consented"

When the first son was born the father had a cow slaughtered at the order of the Shaykh and gave it to the people. After the birth of the second son, however, some of that man's relatives prevented him from slaughtering a cow and feeding it to the people, protesting that if Shaykh Rajab Ali Khayyat was a son of an Imam or he has made a miracle! Who is he that orders to do this and that?! And this way they prevented him from keeping his vow. When the person who had introduced him to the Shaykh reminded him of keeping his vow, he said it was entirely superstitious. After a .while his second son died

The Blessing of Feeding a Hungry Animal

:One of the Shaykh's friends related that one day the Shaykh had told him

Someone was passing through one of the old alleys of Tehran, when suddenly he" saw a dog in the gutter whose puppies were pushing toward her breasts for milk, but the dog was too hungry to have any milk to give to its puppies and was in agony for this reason. Noticing this scene, that person went right away to a nearby kebab shop and got several kebabs and brought to the dog. ...The same night near dawn he was ".graced with an inexplicable blessing by God Almighty

' :The narrator went on with this anecdote

Although the Shaykh never said who that person was, the evidence indicated that it

'.was himself

Dr. Farzam said: 'Whenever I asked the Shaykh if he would give me a piece of advice :when taking leave, he would state

(Do not forget doing good to people, even to the animals."(1)"

Benevolence Based on Love of God

The principal issue in serving people from the viewpoint of the Shaykh is the motive behind it and how it is performed. The Shaykh believed that we should be at the service of people as the Imams and Friends of God were. In their serving people, they had no goal than serving them for the sake of God and for His love. In this regard he :would say

We) (انما نطعمكم لوجه الله) ;Benevolence to people must be based on God-Orientedness" feed you for the sake of Allah alone.) (al-Insan: ٩) How (lovingly) you spend money for your children and you adore them too! Can children do anything for their parents? The parents are in love with their little children and spend money for them out of love. Now why do not you treat God this way?! Why do not you love Him as much as you love your children?! And if by any chance you do a favor to someone you expect "!reward for that

Words of Imam Khomeini (ra) on rendering Service to People

At the end of this chapter it will be appropriate to point out the guideline of Imam .Khomeini (ra) in respect to rendering service to people

In his testament to his son Haj Ahmad

.See Mizan al-Hikmah, VIII, ٣۶٨۶: ٢۶٧۴ -١

:Agha (ra), he wrote

My son! Do not evade the humanitarian responsibility that is, serving God in form of" serving the people. The Satan does not gallop less in this field than among the officials and those in charge of people's affairs. And do not struggle to attain positions; neither spiritual nor worldly positions on the pretext of wishing to approach Divine knowledge or serving the worshippers of Allah, as paying attention to such positions is by itself satanic, let alone struggling to attain them. Listen to Gods admonition whole-heartedly and traverse on that direction: قل انما أعظکم بواحده ان تقوموا لله مثنی وفرادی (Say: I do admonish you on one point: that you do stand up before Allah-(it may be) in pairs, or (it may be) singly.) (Saba': ۴۶) The measure at the outset of traversing is uprising for Allah, both in personal and individual tasks and in social activities; tries to succeed at this first step which is easier and much more attainable at youth. Do not let yourself to become old like your father, so that you will either mark time or move backward; this involves vigilance and self-examination. If a person possesses or rather attains the sovereignty of the jinn and mankind with a Divine motive, he is a possessor of Divine Knowledge and an ascetic in the world; but if he is carnally or satanically motivated, whatever he attains, even if it is a rosary, he will be equally distanced from God."

Prayers of the Friends of God

point

One

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of the eminent features of those trained at the school of the reverend Shaykh is their presence of heart in prayer. And this became possible only because the Shaykh did not accord any value to the spiritless ostentatious prayers, and tried to make his disciples perform really devotional prayers.

In the Shaykh's guidelines concerning prayers, there are four basic principles in this regard, which are adopted from the Holy Qur'an and Islamic traditions:

۱. Love

The reverend Shaykh believed that as a lover enjoys talking to his beloved, a performer of prayers also should enjoy amorous whispering to his lord. Personally, he was like this as friends of God are all like this.

The Holy Prophet (s) described his joy in prayers as follows:

"جعل الله جل ثناؤه قره عینی فی الصلاه، وحبب الی الصلاه کما حبب الی الجائع الطعام، والی الظمآن الماء، وان الجائع اذا اکل شبع، وإن الظمآن اذا شرب روی، وأنا لا أشبع من الصلاه"

"Allah-Great is His Adoration-made the delight of my eyes in prayers and made prayers beloved to me as He made food beloved to the hungry and water beloved to the thirsty; (with the difference that) when the hungry eats he will be satiated and when the thirsty drinks he will be quenched, but I never get satiated (or quenched) from (performing) prayers."(1)

One of the Shaykh's disciples, who had spent thirty years of his life with him, said: 'God knows that I witnessed him standing in prayers like a lover before his Beloved, engrossed in His

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۱- Mizan al-Hikmah, VII, ۳۰۹۲: ۱۰۵۳۵.

Beauty. In my whole life I only saw three people who were extraordinary in their prayers; the late Shaykh Rajab Ali Khayyat, Ayatollah Kuhistani, and Agha Shaykh Habibullah Gulpayigani in Mashhad. They were amazing when standing in prayers; I would see intuitively that the quality of sphere (around them) was otherworldly; they paid no attention to anything other than God.

۲. Courtesy

To be courteous in the presence of the Almighty lord by performers of prayer is one of the issues that Islam has greatly stressed. Imam al-Sajjad (a) said in this relation:

"حق الصلاه ان تعلم انها وفاده الی الله عز وجل، وانک فیها قائم بین یدی الله عز وجل فاذا علمت ذلک قمت مقام الذلیل

الحقیر، الراغب الراهب، الراجی الخائف، المسکین المتضرع، والمعظم لمن کان بین یدیه بالسکون والوقار، وتُقبل علیها بقلبک وتقیمها بحدودها وحقوقها"

The right accorded to prayer is that you should know prayer as entering the" presence of Allah the Most High, and that, when saying prayer, you are standing before the Most High Allah. So, knowing this, you should stand in prayer as an abased and humble servant, eagerly devoted, hopefully fearful, helplessly lamenting; and proceed to prayer peacefully and gracefully with great respect to the One you are standing before, and perform it whole-heartedly with (full) observance of its rules and (rights."(١)

:The reverend Shaykh said about the courtesy of presence

The Satan is always distracting man; remember not to break your attention to God," be courteous in prayer as when you stand attentively before an

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١- ١٠۶۶٩ :٣١٢۴ ,Ibid. VII.

"!eminent personality, so that if your body is pricked by a needle, you would not move

The Shaykh said the above in reply to his son who said to him: 'You smile sometimes when you say prayers.' His son said: 'I guess he was smiling at the Satan implying that '!(he cannot challenge him (i.e. the Shaykh

Anyway, the reverend Shaykh believed that any move (of the body) in the presence of :the Lord is considered as rude and is caused by temptation from the Satan. He said

"!!I saw the Satan kissing the part of the body that one scratched in prayer"

٣. Presence of Heart

The quintessence of prayer is remembering God and sincere presence of the performer's heart in the sacred companionship of Most Exalted God. Thus the Holy :Prophet (s) said

"لايقبل الله صلاه عبد لا يَحظر قلبه مع بدنه"

God would not accept the prayer of a person whose heart is not present with his" (body."(1)

In view of this issue and before leading the congregational prayer, the reverend Shaykh tried to prepare those attending the prayer to find presence of heart. His own .prayer was a typical one with presence of heart

Accordingly, Dr. Farzam said: 'His prayer was very sober and good mannered.(2) Sometimes when I arrived late for the mass prayer and (passing before him) saw his stature in prayer he looked as if his whole body was shivering; with radiant, pale countenance, he was absorbed in what he was reciting. His attention was totally directed on

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.Ibid. VII, ۳۱۱۶: ۱۰۶۳۵ -۱

One of the Shaykh's disciple said: 'Like the late Ayatollah Shahabadi, the Shaykh - ۲ '.also repeated the dhikr of ruku 'and sajdah three times

prayer and his head was always lowered. My implication was that the reverend .Shaykh never felt an iota of doubt in his heart

Another disciple of the Shaykh said: 'He sometimes said to me: "Such and such! Do you know what you say in ruku 'and sajdah? When you say in tashahhud: ' Ashhadu an la ilaha ilia 'llahu wahdahu la sharika la-h (I bear witness that there is no god apart from Allah, Who is unique and without partners)', are you telling the truth? Are you not entangled in your carnal vain desires? Are you not attending other than God? Are you not dealing with

(أرباب متفرقون) (۱۲:۳۹) (many lords differing among themselves)?!

Perseverance in Performing Prayers at their Due Time .۴

Islamic traditions have greatly emphasized performing prayers at their due time. :Imam al-Sadiq (a) said

"فضل الوقت الأول على الآخر كفضل الآخره على الدنيا"

Superiority of performing prayers at due time over performing it at the end of" (prayer) time is like the superiority of the Hereafter to this world."(١)

The reverend Shaykh was very prompt in performing his five prayers at their due time .and enjoined others to do the same

"A Servant of Imam Husayn (a) would not put off his Prayers to Such Late Hours"

The able preacher, Hujj. Agha Sayyid Qasim Shoja'i, related an interesting memory about the reverend Shaykh: 'I used to give sermons since my school years and as I was a well-spoken preacher I used to be invited to many sessions for rawzah(٢), including the sessions held in the house of the late Agha Shaykh Rajab Ali Khayyat on the seventh day of each lunar month. Upstairs, on

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١- Mizan al-Hikmah, VII, ٣١٣٠: ١٠۶٨۵.

٢- Recital of the Martyrdom of Imam al-Husayn (a).

the right side, there was the room where women gathered and I recited the rawzah for them once every month. The Shaykh's room was downstairs. At that time I was .only thirteen years old and had not reached puberty yet

One day after the sermon was over; I went downstairs and encountered the Shaykh for the first time. He was holding a hat in his hand had seemed to be going out. I said :"salam to him" he took a glance at my face and said

The son of the Holy Prophet (s) and the servant of Imam Husayn (a) would not delay" "!!his prayer till now

I said: on my eyes! It was two hours to the sunset and I was a guest somewhere that

day and hadn't said my prayer; as soon as the Shaykh looked at my face he realized this and pointed it out to me. Since my adolescence and after that when I attended his sessions -which were held in the residence of Agha Hakimi Ahan Furush -I felt this man's sayings were inspired whenever he spoke, as he did not have scholarly knowledge but when he spoke the audience would get absorbed wholeheartedly. I :still remember some of his words as he said

Leave behind the word 'we'; wherever the words 'we' and 'I' reign there abides" polytheism. There is only one pronoun reigning and that is 'He', and if you sideline that ".pronoun, the other pronouns are polytheistic

Whenever the late reverend

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Shaykh expressed such statements, they would get enshrined in one's heart and .mind

Anger, the Bane of Prayers

:The reverend Shaykh is quoted as saying

One evening I was passing by a Masjid up the Sirus Avenue in Tehran. (١) Entered the" Masjid to enjoy the virtue of performing prayer at its due time and went into the shabistan (oratory). There I saw someone saying prayer and he had a halo round his head. I thought to myself I would become familiar with him to see what qualities he had that caused him to have such spiritual state in prayer. At the end of the mass prayer I accompanied him out of the Masjid. At the gate he had a row with the Masjid attendant and even shouted angrily at him and went on his way. After (letting out his) "!anger, I saw that halo disappeared from around his head

The Hajj of the Friends of God

point

The reverend Shaykh could never financially afford to go on the obligatory Hajj

pilgrimage. His guidelines to some Hajj pilgrims, however indicates that he had been quite familiar with the mysteries of the Hajj of God's friends. He believed that the real perfect Hajj will be accomplished only when the pilgrim is in love with the Lord of the House (Ka'bah) so that he can perceive the real goals of Hajj rituals. Thus in response :to someone who suggested to go on Hajj together with him, he said

"!First learn how to be a lover, then come over to go to Makkah together"

Recommendations of the Shaykh to the Hajj Pilgrims

(Endeavor to Visit Hazrat Wali 'Asr (aj .۱

One

This Masjid was located down "Sarcheshmah Avenue". However, due to road - ۱ .expansion it was divided into two sections

of the reverend Shaykh's old disciples said: 'The first time I was setting out on the Hajj :pilgrimage to the Holy Makkah, I went to him to ask for guidelines. He said

From your departure until forty days read the noble ayah"

(رب أدخلنی مدخل صدق وأخرجنی مخرج صدق واجعل لی من لدنک سلطاناً نصیرا)

O my Lord! Let my entry be by the Gate of Truth and Honor, and likewise my exit by) the Gate of Truth and Honor; and grant me from Thy presence an authority to aid .((me)) (۱۷:۸۰), perhaps you will be able to see Wali 'Asr (aj

:Then he added

How is it possible that one is invited to go to someone's house and fail to see the" landlord!? Be fully alert to see that blessed Imam (aj) in one of the rituals of the Hajj " .insha ' Allah

(Forbid Love of Anything other than God while in Ihram (pilgrims' garment .۲

The person who puts on Ihram in Mi'qat should know that he has come here to forbid" himself from other than God, and since the moment he says labbayk, he accepts God's invitation and rendered as forbidden other than God to himself. Whatever interest in other than God is unlawful to him and he should not pay attention to other "!than God till the last moments of his life

Complete Orientation towards God While Circumambulating Ka'bah .۳

Circumambulating the Ka'bah is apparently turning around the House, but you should" know that what is meant by this turning is to make God the

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axis of ones life and to annihilate completely in Him. Find a state of spirit so that you)turn around Him and be sacrificed for Him."(۱

(Invocation under the Golden Spout (of Ka'bah .۴

In the Hijr of Isma'il and under the golden spout where the pilgrims beseech God" Almighty to resolve their problems, you propose: O God! Train me for serving You and "!(helping Your Wali, Hujjat ibn al-Hasan (aj

Killing the Carnal Soul in Mina .۵

When you go to Mina, what do you do at the place of Sacrifice? Do you know what" !the philosophy of sacrifice is? Do indeed sacrifice your imperative carnal self

So turn (in repentance) to your Maker, and slay yourselves(فتوبوا الی بارئکم فاقتلوا انفسکم) (the wrongdoers).) (al-Baqarah: ۵۴) Behead your carnal soul and return. Get rid of your "!carnal soul, instead of having it become more powerful once you return

!The only Place where they Displayed Affection

Upon returning (from Hajj), I had audience with the Shaykh and said: I would like to :know whether any results have come out. He said

"!Lower your head and recite the al-Hamd"

Then he deliberated for a moment and stated what places I have passed through in :the Masjid al-Haram as well as my station there to the point where he said

The only place that they displayed affection to you was the cemetery of Baqi' where" ".you were in such and such a state and demanded such and such things

.Whatever I beseeched there from God was revealed to him

The Banquet for Returning from Hajj

After returning from Hajj, I invited the Shaykh and

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Mizan al-Hikmah, IV, ۱۵۷۲: ۵۲۲۵; Ghurar al-Hikam, ۱۰۱۶۲. Similar concept is found in -۱ .Nahjul Balagha, maxim no. ۸۲

some others to my house for Hajj banquet. We had prepared chelowkebab for the feast. We spread a separate tablecloth for the reverend Shaykh and several other :private guests up on the portico. Noticing this, the Shaykh called me and said

Why do you show off?! Do not be too proud of yourself! Do not discriminate among" people; treat them equally! Why do you give preference to some? No! I will mingle "!with the others, no distinction

(The Mysteries of Hajj in the Sayings of Imam Khomeini (ra

It is worthwhile to know that what the reverend Shaykh has stated about the philosophy of Hajj based on his own intuitive findings are very close to what Imam Khomeini (ra) has expressed in explaining the mystical aspects of the Hajj pilgrimage, :which are of interest to be touched upon here as a conclusion to this chapter

"The Secret of Frequently Uttering "Labbayk

Repeatedly uttering Labbayk is true for those who have heard the call of God by the" ear of their soul and are responding to the call from Allah the Almighty by (His)

comprehensive Name. It is the issue of being present in the Presence and witnessing the Beauty of the Beloved, as though the chanter (of Labbayk) has at this moment lost to himself and repeats the response to the call followed by denying association (with other than God) in the absolute sense of the word, (and) not simply association with Divinity, which is known to the devotees of God; although denying association in that includes all stages up to the

annihilation of the world in the view of the people of knowledge and contains the entire cautionary and preferential issues. For instance, "alhamd laka wa' lni 'ma laka. .." dedicates hamd as well as the ni'ma to the Sacred Essence (of God) and denies association. This, to the people of knowledge, is the ultimate in monotheism, i. e., any praise (hamd) and blessing (ni'ma) that occur in the word is a praise to God and a blessing of God without association (with other than God). This high object prevails at every mawqif (station) and mash'ar (place of religious ritual), every stopping and moving, and every rest and action. Opposing to it means association in general, which (we, the blind- hearted ones, are all suffering from."(۱)

The Secret of Circumambulation

Turning round the House of Allah suggests that you should not turn round other than " (God."(۲)

In circumambulating the Holy Haram of God, which is a sign of love of God, remove" others from your heart and clean all fears other than fear of Allah from your soul, and in line with love' of God, disavow the greater and the lesser idols, the taghuts, and their associates,' the ones that the God Almighty and His friends disavowed from and (all the liberated of the world are freed from it.(۳)

Allegiance to God

When touching Hajr al-Aswad (the Black Stone), make allegiance to God that you" would be hostile to the enemies of God and his apostles and the pious and the liberated, and not to obey and serve them

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۱- Imam Khomeini's message to the Hajj pilgrims on the occasion of 'id al-Adha, Aug ۲۹, ۱۹۸۴.

۲- Ibid. act ۳, ۱۹۷۹.

۳- Ibid, August ۷, ۱۹۸۶.

whoever and wherever they are; and to remove fear and meanness from your heart about the God's enemies, led by the great Satan (the U.S.A), even though they are superior in means of murdering and suppressing and criminal acts,"(۱)

Sa'y (Attempt) in finding the Beloved

"In the sa'y between Safa and Marwah try sincerely and truthfully to look for the Beloved; when you find Him all the worldly knots will be untied, all the doubts will be removed, all the animal fears and hopes will be obliterated, all the material attachments will break off; nobility will flourish, and the satanic and idolatry bondages that hold the servants of God in captivity and obedience will fall apart."(۲)

Mindfulness and 'Irfan (Gnosticism) in Mash'ar and 'Arafat

"Go on to the Mash'ar al-Haram and Arafat with mindfulness and Gnostic state and at any station (mawqif) reassure yourself more and more of God' s promises and the rule of the oppressed. With silence and dignity, deliberate over signs of the truth and think of liberating the down-trodden and the oppressed from the clutches of the world arrogance, and beseech the Almighty God, at those holy stations, to show you the ways of deliverance (and liberation)."(۳)

The Secret of Making Sacrifices in Mina

"Then go to Mina and find out the true wishes there, where is a place for sacrificing your most favorite objects of love in the way of the Absolute Beloved. And know that you will not reach the Absolute Beloved unless you abandon such

.Ibid -۱

.Ibid -۲

.Ibid -۳

objects of love on top of which are the love of self and the love of the (material) (world."(۱

Rajm-i 'Aqabat (Cursing the Satan by Throwing Pebbles at the Symbolic Pillars in Mina

You go on this divine journey to throw pebbles at the Satan. If you are, God forbid," among the army of the Satan, you throw pebbles at yourselves, too. You should become Divine, so that your rajm (throwing pebble) is the stoning of the Satan by the (army of the most compassionate God."(۲

Friends of God's Fear

point

The first question, after discussing the issue of love of God that crosses one's mind in respect to the elixir of self-building is that if God is kind and affectionate and His love is the most influential element of evolution, so why is there so much stress on fear of God Almighty in Islamic texts? Why does the Holy Qur'an regard fear of God as the ?most "eminent quality of the Ulama? And finally, are love and fear consistent

The answer is yes; the reverend Shaykh gave an interesting example of consistency between fear and love, which will be touched upon in this chapter. Before that, .however, the meaning of fear and love of God is to be reviewed

The Meaning of Fear of God

The First point in interpreting Divine fear and love is that the fear of God is indeed fear :of committing sins and evil acts. Imam Ali (a) said

"لا تَخَف الا ذنبک، لا ترجُ الا ربک"

Do not fear except of your own sins and"

.Ibid -۱

Sayings of Imam Khomeini (ra) at the meeting with the Ulama and directors of Hajj -۲ .groups on Sep ۳۰, ۱۹۷۹

(do not hold out hope except in God."(۱

"!Do not Fear God"

One day Imam Ali (a) encountered someone whose face had been transformed out of :fear; he asked him

"?What has happened to you"

:The man answered: 'I am afraid of God!' The holy Imam (a) said

Servant of God! Be afraid of your sins and fear Divine Justice in judging your" wrongdoing against His servants! Obey God in what He has obligated you to do, and do not disobey in what is good for you. So, do not fear God as He does no injustice to (anyone and He does not chastise beyond one's deserving."(۲

Fear of Separation

Hence, nobody should fear God, rather we should fear ourselves not to be encumbered by the outcome of our own unseemly actions. The fear of the friends of God of their unrighteous actions to be punished, however, is different from the fear that other people have. Those who have driven out the love of other than God from their hearts and their obedience to God is neither for the fear of Hell nor for the hope in Paradise, only fear of separation. For them the torment of separation from God is more painful than the Hellfire. Thus the leader of the friends of God, Amir al-Mu'minin :Ali (a) laments in his supplication to God

"فلئن صیرتنی للعقوبات مع أعدائک، وجمعت بینی وبین أهل بلائک وفرّقت بینی وبین أحبائک وأولیائک فهبنی یا الهی وسیدی ومولای وربی صبرت علی عذابک فکیف أصبر علی فراقک؟!"

So if you subject me to"

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۱ - See "Benevolence to Jobless Person Encumbered by a Large Family", Chapter Seven, Part ۳.

۲ - The late Suhayli was quoted as saying: 'What he meant by "Agha Jan" (my dear master) was Imam al-'Asr (aj) who had come to visit the Shaykh at that moment.

the punishments with Your enemies, gather me with the people of Your chastisement and separate me from Your friends and favorites, then suppose, my God, my Master, my Protector and my Lord, that I may be able to endure Your chastisement but how can I endure separation from You?(۱)

The reverend Shaykh commented the holy verse, يدعون ربهم خوفا وطمعا(They call on their Lord in fear and hope) (al-Sajdah: ۱۶) as follows:

What is this fear and hope? Fear of separation from and hope of union with Him." Parallel to this in concept is the saying of Amir al- Mu'minin Ali (a) in supplication of Kumail:

فهبنى يا الهى... وسيدى ومولاى وربى صبرت على عذابك فكيف أصبر على فراقك 'Then suppose, my Allah... that I may... be able to endure Your chastisement, but how can I endure separation from You?'

ووصلك منى نفسى وإليك شوقى ..

And also in the supplication of Imam al-Sajjad (a): 'Joining Thee is the wish of my soul, and toward Thee is my yearning."(۲)

The renowned Gnostic and jurist the late Mulla Ahmad Naraqi also said in this respect:

'Said in supplication the king of awliya, may my soul be sacrificed to him, that O my Lord, O God,

Maybe I can tolerate Your punishment, how can I endure Your separation O Friend?

The wet-nurse frightens the kids of fire (and says) do not play o such and such ,otherwise

I'll place fire on your hand and foot, stigmatize your face and back, But they

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۱- In the supplication ۲۱ of Sahifah al-Sajjadiya (Psalms of Islam, p. ۷۹) we read: "وهب لی الانس بک وأولیائک وأهل طاعتک" And give me intimacy with Thee, Thy friends, and those who obey Thee!"

۲- Psalms of Islam, p. ۲۴۷.

frighten the lion (-hearted) man (Ali (a)) of the chastisement of separation with a thousand fold fear and awe. '(۱)

Fear of not being accepted by the Beloved

Friends of God have fear even though they perform their obligations. They fear lest their Beloved does not like them and does not accept them:

(الذین یؤتون مآ أتوا وقلوبهم وجله أنهم الی ربهم راجعون)

(And those who dispense their Charity with their hearts full of fear, because they will return to their Lord.) (al-Mu'minun: ۶۰)

Acceptance of a Beloved who is absolutely perfect is as important for the friends of God as also the pain of separation (from the Beloved) is heart-rending and unbearable for them. This is so important that Imam Khomeini (ra), as quoted by Tehran Friday prayer leader, at the last moments of his life requested people to pray that God Almighty accept him!

Now see how the Shaykh explains this subtle Gnostic issue by a simple example.

One of the Shaykh's disciples said: 'Once he (the reverend Shaykh) said to me:

"Such and such! For whom does a bride make up herself?"

'.I said: 'For the groom

:He said: "Did you understand?" I kept silent. Then he said

On the consummation night, the bride's relatives try to make up her in the best" possible way so that the groom would have a liking for her. The bride, however, has a secret worry that is unnoticed to others; She is worried that what should she do if she could not attract the groom's interest or if he happens

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.Mathnawi of Taqdis: ۲۱۵ -۱

.to feel disgust in her

How can the servant, who does not know whether his deeds are accepted by God Almighty, be not fearful and worried?! Do you make up (adorn) yourself for Him or for !?yourself and for gaining a good reputation among the people

O my Lord! Send me back (to)(رب ارجعون لعلى أعمل صالحاً) When people die they implore life)-In order that I may work righteousness in the things I neglected.) (al-Mu'minun: ".(۹۹, ۱۰۰

Hence, the reverend Shaykh was always fearful of meeting with God Almighty and :would say

And for such as had) (وأما من خاف مقام ربه) ,You say that there is no fear of God" entertained the fear of standing be for their Lord.) (al-Nazi'at: ۴۰), but what on earth "?should we do if He would not like us and would not accept our deeds

:The Shaykh's son quoted him as saying

O Lord! Purchase and accept us as the old junk-Iike object as the street vendor calls" "!out: 'I buy (your) broken and junk objects'- O Lord accept and buy us too

Part ۴: Passing Away

The Passing Away of Shaykh Rajab Ali Khayyat

point

Finally on twenty second of Shahrivar of ۱۳۴۰ Solar Hijra / September ۱۳, ۱۹۶۱, the blessed life of the reverend Shaykh came to an end and the bird of his soul departed this life after a life long spiritual self-building and enriching others. The story of his radiant soul's departure from the world to the sublime abode is interesting and instructive to hear. In

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this section, the story of the Shaykh's passing away will be related followed by an account of the death of two other friends of God, very similar to that of the Shaykh, .given in chapters two and three

The Day before his Heavenly Departure

The Shaykh's son describes the day before his passing away as follows: 'The day before his death, my father was well and healthy, my mother was out, and I was alone. In the afternoon, my father returned home, made wuzu (minor ablution) and :called me, saying

I feel a little ill, if that servant of God (a certain customer) comes to pick up his" ".clothing, the scraps(۱) are in the pocket, and he has to pay thirty tomans as a wage

My father had never told me before that if someone came to pick up his clothes how .much the wage would be. But that day I did not grasp what would happen

A Dream by One of his Disciples

One of the Shaykh's devotees who had foreseen his heavenly departure the night :before his death through a "true dream", told the story as follows

The night before the Shaykh left this world, I dreamed they were shutting down the' shops on the west side of Masjid-i Qazvin. I asked: What has happened? They said Agha Shaykh Rajab Ali Khayyat has expired. I woke up perplexed and worried. It was

three hours past midnight. I regarded my dream as a true one. After morning adhan, I said prayer and left for Agha Radmanish's house right away. He enquired surprisingly

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.Extra pieces of cloth left over after tailoring -۱

.of my untimely visit and I told him about my dream

It was five in the morning, at twilight, that we set out for the Shaykh's house. The :Shaykh opened the door, we went in and sat down. The Shaykh sat, too, and said

"?What have you been up to at such an early morning"

I did not tell him my dream. We talked for a while and then the Shaykh lay down on his :side and placed his hand under his head, saying

"!Tell something, recite a poem"

:Someone sang

.There is no time more joyful than the love days'

.There is no night to the day of the lovers

,The delightful hours were the time spent with the Friend

'.The rest was all fruitlessness and ignorance

The Shaykh on his Deathbed

In less than an hour I noticed that the Shaykh's condition got worse. I asked him whether to call a doctor for him - I was sure that he would pass away that day. The :Shaykh replied

".It's up to you"

The doctor wrote a prescription and I went out to have it filled. When I returned I saw

the Shaykh was taken to another room. He was sitting facing the qiblah with a white sheet covering his legs; he was touching the white sheet with his thumb and .forefinger

I was very attentive to see how a man of God departs from the world. All of a sudden there was a change of state in him as if someone was whispering something

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:in his ears. He said

".(Insha Allah (God willing"

:Then he said

"!What day is today? Bring today's supplication"

:I recited that day's supplication. Then he said

:Have it read by Agha Sayyid Ahmad too." He recited it, too. Then the Shaykh said"

:Raise your hands to the sky and say"

Ya Karim al-'afw, Ya 'Azim al-'afw (O Noble! Forgive me, O Great! Forgive me), may ".God forgive me

I looked at my friend and said: 'Let me go to bring Agha Suhayli, as it seems my dream '.is coming true and he is meeting his end, and I left

!Welcome my Dear Master

The Shaykh's son related the rest of this story as follows: 'I saw my father's room was crowded. They said the reverend Shaykh's condition was serious. I entered the room right away and saw my father-who had made ablution few moments before and came into the room-was leaning in his bed facing the qibla; but all of a sudden he sat :up and said while smiling

"(1)"!Welcome my dear master (

He seemed to shake hands with someone, lay down, and passed away while having the same smile on his lips!

The First Night after the Burial

Another of his friends said: 'In a dream, I saw the Shaykh on the first night after his burial. I saw that a grand station was bestowed upon him by Mawla Amir al-Mu'minin Ali (a). I approached that station; as soon as he saw me, he took a very tender and fine glance at me like a father who admonishes

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۱- ۶۰ :۳۹۲, IXX, quoted from Bihar al-Anwar, ۱۵۷۲:۵۲۲۳, Mizan al-Hikmah, IV.

his son and the son is paying no attention. His glance reminded me that he always would say:

"Do not want other than God."

But we were still encumbered by our vain desires. I got further closer to him. He said two sentences:

The first sentence:

"(1)"The joy of life is intimacy with God and the friends of God. (

And the second sentence:

"He (Imam Ali (a)) lived (such a true life) that his wife (Hazrat Fatima (a)) gave away his shirt (in self-sacrifice) on the night of consummation in the way of God."

والسلام عليه يوم ولد ويوم مات ويوم يبعث حياُ.

So peace on him the day he was born, the day that he dies, and the day that he will be raised up to life (again).

The Passing Away of Ayatollah Hujjat

point

As mentioned at the outset of this part, I deemed it worthwhile to narrate the passing away accounts of two other friends of God because of their similarity to that of the Shaykh and their instructiveness. One of these two noblemen was Ayatollah Hujjat (ra) who was the Shaykh's marja' and the Shaykh adored him for his sincerity and viewed him as detached from worldly ambitions.(٢) Now we would hear the story of this great men's heavenly departure from his noble son-in- law, Ayatollah Haj Shaykh :Murtaza Hairi (ra) whom I had the honor to humbly learn from as a student

House Repair

First of all I should say that although the late Ayatollah Hujjat was my teacher and father-in-law, I would

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.Supplication of Kumail -١

.See Chapter Four, Part I -٢

not go to his house very often and did not involve in the affairs relating to his chairmanship. He was, however, at the time of Ayatollah Burujirdi (ra), the absolute marja ' or the marja' to the majority of the people in Azerbaijan. In Tehran also the Azerbaijanis as well as non-Azerbaijanis referred to him (to solve their religious problems). He paid monthly salary (to the talabas) too, and was to some extent sufficiently authorized in (personal) expenditure. Early the winter of that year, it was not too cold yet, and he was having the house repaired, with a comer of the courtyard excavated for constructing a new building, and some workers were doing other repair work in the house, including digging a well required for the extension of the building. The construction was supported financially not by himself but by one of his devotees .residing in Tehran whose name – if I remember correctly – was Chaichi

"!I am About to Die"

One morning I(١) went to visit him in the interior of the house. He was sitting on the bed feeling not sick. Due to some chronic bronchitis, he normally suffered from asthma when it would get cold. At that time, in spite of the beginning of the cold season, he did not seem to suffer very much (from asthma). I was told that he had dismissed the construction workers. I asked him why he dismissed the workers. He answered firmly and explicitly:

"I am about to die, so what the construction for?"

١- The narrator, Ayatollah Ha'iri.

I did not say anything, and do not remember that I was very surprised by his response. Then he said to me: "My dear! Come over for the next few days." He meant not to keep a distance like before.

"O God! I did what I was Obligated to Do!"

As I remember I would go over (to his place) every morning after teaching Makasib, which I taught in the exterior room (of his house) and sometimes I would go early evenings. One day, most probably a Wednesday, he sent me a special message to see him for some task. I went to see him that day. There was a big iron chest before him, and Agha Haj Sayyid Ahmad Zanjani(١) was sitting in front of him. He gave the documents and title deeds to Agha Zanjani and all the cash in the chest to me to spend in certain ways, allotting some of it as my portion. He had already written his will in several copies and sent one to me which I still have. He had some money in Najaf, in Tabriz, and in Qum with the late Haj Muhammad Husayn Yazdi, who was one of the executors to my late father (ra). He (Ayatollah Hujjat) had stated in his will that all the money which had been trusted to his representatives was sahm-i Imam (portion belonging to the Imam al-'Asr (aj)), and the piece of land - it later on formed a big part of the Masjid of Agha Burujirdi - which he had bought for madrasa

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,'The father of Ayatollah Haj Agha Musa Zanjani, a contemporary marja -١

.and was in his own name

He had stated in his will that the piece of land also belonged to the Holy Imam (aj) and could not be bequeathed, but - apparently - if Agha Burujirdi wanted for the masjid it .could be given to him

His cash simply included the money in the chest and he had been refusing to receive the religious taxes and legal alms (wujuhat-i shari) for the past few days. However, Agha Zanjani seemed to be receiving the wujuhat who began to pay the monthly salary (shahriyeh to talabas) since the first month after the demise of Ayatollah Hujjat. There was only a few coins under his pillow which upon his falling sick, his daughter-i.e., my wife-took from his pocket to be kept under his pillow until he got better and then to be given as alms-as was a popular custom with the women of the past and I was familiar with this custom too. It seemed that the money was kept as a kind of pawn to be given as alms after the patient would recover. That was the only money left which Agha (Ayatollah Hujjat) did not know about. When he gave the money in the chest to me to spend in the due way, he said while raising his hands to :the sky

(O God! I did what I was obligated to do, you take my life, now!"(١"

"My Death will be at Noon"

Having been more intimate with him, I said: 'Agha you are afraid so much

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.Or a similar statement like this -١

for no reason! Every year at winter you happen to come down with the same problem, :but recover later on. He (apparently) said

".No, my case or my death will be at noon"

I did not say anything else and went out to do his errands. I took a dorshky (a carriage) to do the errands as quickly as possible lest his demise should happen at noon and the assignment would not be carried out as to whether spend the money as he advised or to give it to the inheritors. The task was done with by noon, and he did .not pass away that day

Resorting to the Holy Qur'an

One of nights around that time he told me to give him the Holy Qur'an. Apparently with some deliberation and dhikr, he opened the Holy Qur'an (at random), which for Him (alone) is(له دعوه الحق) ,opened at the beginning of the page with the holy verse (prayer in truth.) (al-Ra'd, ۱۴

He seemed to cry and whispered something to God that I do not remember right now. .He broke his muhr; I do not remember either it was the same night or another night

"!Agha Ali, Please Come in"

One day near his demise he was gazing at the door, obviously watching a certain :thing, when he said

"!Agha Ali, please come in"

I did not last long before he came to himself. In the last few days he was usually engaged in dhikr and whispering prayers. Once the supplication of Adilah was also recited. I do not

remember it was by me or by someone else. On the day of his demise I taught my lecture of al-Makasib at home with much certainty, since I knew his condition was not too serious. After that I went to the same room that he was in bed. At that time only his daughter (my wife) was with him. He was lying in bed facing the fall and reciting dhikr and supplication. She said that he was a bit disturbed that day, and it seemed to :be due to much prayer and dhikr.When I said salam, he asked

What day is today?" I said it was Saturday. Then he asked: "Has Agha Burujirdi gone" "?for the lecture

:I said, yes. And he said very sincerely and whole-heartedly for several times

.(Alhamdu lillah (praise be to Allah"

.He said other things, too, that I avoid mentioning for brevity

(Water Mixed with Turba (Soil from Imam Husayn (a)'s Place of Martyrdom

His daughter said: Agha is somewhat disturbed today, let's give him a little turba. I said it was fine. She prepared the turba (mixed with water) and I offered it to him to take. He sat up and I held the glass to him. Thinking it was food or medicine, he said :with a frown

"?What is it"

I said it was turba. His face lit up immediately and took the glass and drank up the :turba liquid. Then I heard him utter these words

"آخر زادی من الدنیا تربه الحسین"

".(My last provision from the world (is) the turba of (Imam) Husayn (a"

He said the turba very clearly. He lay down two times and then sat up and began reciting supplications and dhikr. I was around either in the interior or the exterior (of .(the house

The supplication of Adilah was recited for the second time for him and apparently by his demand. Agha Sayyid Hasan, his second son, was sitting facing the qibla, and Ayatollah Hujjat himself was leaning over a cushion and was sitting in a bending position, expressing his beliefs before God Almighty in Persian and Azeri with extreme .sincerity and devoutness

"!?Without an Intermediary"

I remember him saying about Amir al-Mu'minin Ali (a) while confessing his caliphate in :Azeri

Bila fasl, ihch fasili yukhdi, lap bila fasli lap bila fasli kimin fasli war"

without intermediary, there was no intermediary, of course there was no) "!?(intermediary! Who has an intermediary

And he recited the following verse from the Holy Qur'an regarding the Ahl al-Bayt of :(the--Holy Prophet (s) and Imam Ali (a

(مثلا كلمه طيبه كشجره طيبه أصلها ثابت وفرعها فى السماء)

A parable of goodly Word like a goodly tree, whose root is firmly fixed, and its) (branches (reach) to the heavens.) (Ibrahim, ۲۴

I was also standing in a corner and watching this amazing spiritual scene, totally wondering. It crossed my mind to tell him: 'Agha! Pray for me!' but I felt shy; first of all, he was self-occupied and was unaware of his surrounding, seeing only himself and his ,spiritual duties before death in the presence of God. And secondly

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such request would mean that we were witnessing his dying and aware of his .surrendering to death

I was standing silently behind this scene and the crowd that was present-one of whom was Agha Sayyid Hasan and the other was his daughter and other members of :his family. I also heard him say

O God! All my beliefs are present; I trust them to you (now), return them to me (in the" .(Hereafter

I was standing there and he was busy with his whispering prayers when all of a sudden, while he was leaning on the cushion facing the qibla, his breath failed. Those

who were present thought that he had a heart attack, so they dripped some Coramin drops in his mouth. But I saw the liquid flowed back down the corner of his lips; he had passed away right at the moment his breath failed and after the turba mixture not even a drop of Coramin went down his throat. I was quite aware that he had passed away. I left the room and heard the call of adhan from Madrasa Hujjatiyya. His death :took place at noon, as he had said himself on Wednesday

".My death (or my case) will be at noon"

In the end, Ayatollah Hairi added: 'Besides suggesting a clear form of a firm belief, this :narrative includes some signs from the Unseen world

.He predicted his death to be at noon and it happened at noon .١

He observed Amir al-Mu'minin Ali .٢

p: ٢٠٢

.a) in an intuition)

He predicted that his last provision from the world was turba. And it happened so, .٣ without himself asking for the turba or knowing that the glass contained turba mixed (with water, since he was unwilling to drink it, not knowing what it was.'(١)

The Passing Away of Haj Akhund Turbati

point

Another of the friends of God whose story of death is interesting and instructive to read is the late Haj Akhund Turbati, the father of the famous preacher, the late Husayn Ali Rashed (ra). The latter, has described the event of his father's death in his :book, The Forgotten Virtues which is a biography of his father, as follows

One Week before his Heavenly Departure

Among the things we (the family members) remember of him and still is ambiguous to us is that my father died on Sunday October ١۶, ١٩۴٣ CE., (Shawwal, ١٧, ١٣۶٢ AH.) at

around two hours after the sunrise, having said his morning prayer while lying in his deathbed. His legs being stretched toward the qibla, he was conscious to the last moment of his life and was whispering some words as if he was aware of his dying. The last thing he uttered before his soul left his body was the phrase, "la ilaha illallah" .((there is no god but Allah

"(Salutation to you O Rasulallah (s"

It was exactly on Sunday the week before his death after the morning prayer when he lay toward the qibla and covered his face with his robe that all of a sudden his whole body became illuminated as brightly as

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.Sirr-i Dilbaran, ۲۰۶-۲۱۴ -۱

the sun rays projecting through an opening on a surface, making his face radiant and shining whereas it had been pale and yellowish due to illness; it was so brightly shining that it was seen from under the robe that he had covered on his body. He :made a movement and said

"!?Salam Alaikum ya Rasulallah (s)! You have come to visit this unworthy servant"

After that, as though he was really visited by some people, he saluted Amir al-Mu'minin Ali (a) and all Imams (a) up to the twelfth Imam (aj) one after another and thanked them for their visit. Then he saluted Hazrat Fatima Zahra (a). Finally he :saluted Hazrat Zaynab (a) and at this moment cried a lot, saying

".Bibi! I cried for you too much"

"!Rest in Peace, Mother"

:Then he saluted his own mother, saying

".I am grateful of you mother, you gave me pure (sublime) milk"

This state lasted until two hours after sunrise. After that, the light that had illumined his body disappeared and his face turned pale again like before. It was just one week later on another Sunday at the same period of two hours that he spent in the agony of .death and then gently gave up his body

"!Do not Tease me Husayn Ali"

On one of the weekdays-between the two Sundays-I told him: 'We hear things narrated to us from the Prophets and noblemen and wish we had been at their time and heard them directly; now, you who are my closest kin have had this experience. I

wish I knew what it was (that happened to you). He kept silent and said nothing. I repeated my request two or three more times in different wordings and he still kept silent. It was the fourth or the fifth time (of my repeating the request) that he :responded

"Do not tease me Husayn Ali"

:I said: 'I meant to understand something.' He said

".I cannot make you understand; you go and try to understand it yourself"

This state has remained as a puzzle to me and my mother, brother, sister and aunt, and up to the present that I am writing this account, i.e., ۹:۳۰ a.m, Tuesday, July ۱۵, ۱۹۷۵ (fifth of Rajab, ۱۳۹۵ AH.), I know nothing of (the details of) this issue, but just say that (such state really happened.(۱

.The Forgotten Virtues", p. ۱۴۹" -۱

About center

In the name of Allah

هَلْيَسْتَوِيالَّذِينَيَعْلَمُونَوَالَّذِينَلَايَعْلَمُونَ

?Are those who know equal to those who do not know

al-Zumar: ۹

:Introduction

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan, from ۲۰۰۷, under the authority of Ayatollah Haj SayyedHasanFaqihImami (God blesses his soul), by sincere and daily efforts of university and seminary elites and sophisticated groups began its activities .in religious, cultural and scientific fields

:Manifesto

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan in order to facilitate and accelerate the accessibility of researchers to the books and tools of research, in the field of Islamic science, and regarding the multiplicity and dispersion of active centers in this field

and numerous and inaccessible sources by a mere scientific intention and far from any kind of social, political, tribal and personal prejudices and currents, based on performing a project in the shape of (management of produced and published works from all Shia centers) tries to provide a rich and free collection of books and research papers for the experts, and helpful contents and discussions for the educated generation and all classes of people interested in reading, with various formats in the .cyberspace

:Our Goals are

(propagating the culture and teachings of Thaqalayn (Quran and Ahlulbayt p.b.u.t-

encouraging the populace particularly the youth in investigating the religious issues-

replacing useful contents with useless ones in the cellphones, tablets and computers-

providing services for seminary and university researchers-

spreading culture study in the publich-

paving the way for the publications and authors to digitize their works-

:Policies

acting according to the legal licenses-

relationship with similar centers-
avoiding parallel working-
merely presenting scientific contents-
mentioning the sources-
.It's obvious that all the responsibilities are due to the author

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:Appreciation
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:Address of the central office
Isfahan, Abdorazaq St, Haj Mohammad JafarAbadei Alley, Shahid Mohammad HasanTavakkoly Alley, Number plate ۱۲۹, first floor

Website: www.ghbook.ir
Email: Info@ghbook.ir
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